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Alfred Croquis del.

Walcott Worth

AUTHOR OF "THE EXCURSION."

Published by James Fraser, 245 Regent Street, London.

your time, & waited till we had
communications from Germany.

I take the pen from
Mrs W's hand to thank you
and bid you adieu - I
have been nearly a week, staying
with Mr Sawney - who unfortunately
was confined to the house by a
severe cold - he is at present
very busy -

ever most faithfully

Yours much obliged

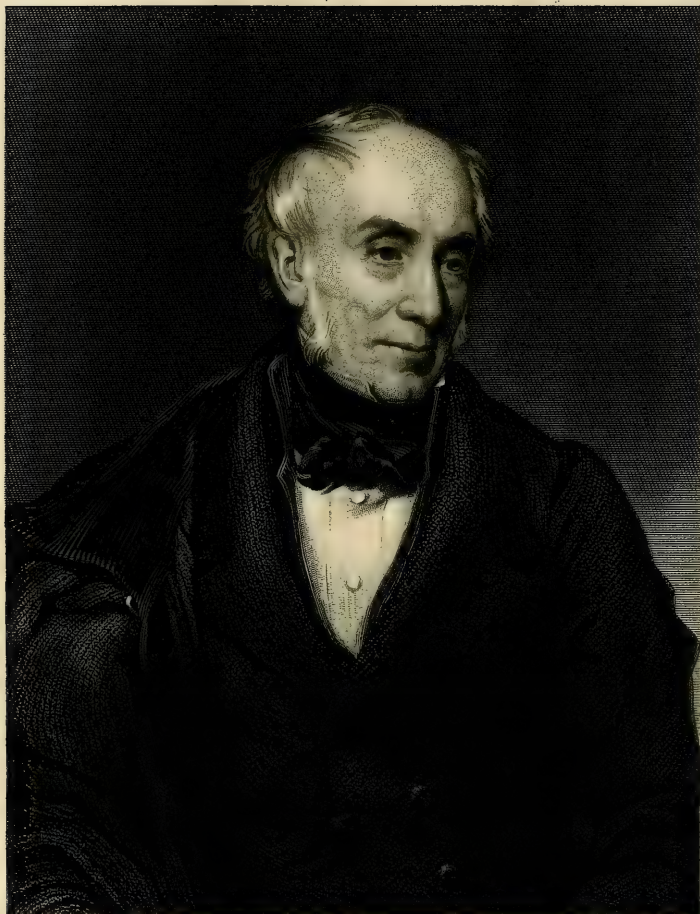
W. Wordsworth -

Wordsworth

J. Huntly Gordon Esq^r







H. W. Pickersgill. R.A.

J. Skelton.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

LONDON, EDWARD MOXON, DOVER STREET, 1851.

THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.



Rydal Mount

L O N D O N .
EDWARD MOXON, DOVER STREET.
1847.

THE

P O E M S

OF

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

A NEW EDITION.

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EDWARD MOXON, DOVER STREET.

1858.

LONDON:
BRADBURY AND EVANS, PRINTERS, WHITEFRIARS.

If thou indeed derive thy light from Heaven,
Then, to the measure of that heaven-born light,
Shine, Poet ! in thy place, and be content :—
The stars pre-eminent in magnitude,
And they that from the zenith dart their beams,
(Visible though they be to half the earth,
Though half a sphere be conscious of their brightness)
Are yet of no diviner origin,
No purer essence, than the one that burns,
Like an untended watch-fire, on the ridge
Of some dark mountain ; or than those which seem
Humbly to hang, like twinkling winter lamps,
Among the branches of the leafless trees ;
All are the undying offspring of one Sire :
Then, to the measure of the light vouchsafed,
Shine, Poet ! in thy place, and be content.

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POEMS

BY

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

POEMS WRITTEN IN YOUTH.

Of the Poems in this class, "THE EVENING WALK" and "DESCRIPTIVE SKETCHES" were first published in 1793. They are reprinted with some alterations that were chiefly made very soon after their publication.

* * * * *

This notice, which was written some time ago, scarcely applies to the Poem, "Descriptive Sketches," as it now stands. The corrections, though numerous, are not, however, such as to prevent its retaining with propriety a place in the class of Juvenile Pieces.

1836.

I.

EXTRACT

FROM THE CONCLUSION OF A POEM, COMPOSED IN ANTICIPATION OF LEAVING SCHOOL.

DEAR native regions, I foretell,
From what I feel at this farewell,
That, wheresoe'er my steps may tend,
And whensoe'er my course shall end,
If in that hour a single tie
Survive of local sympathy,
My soul will cast the backward view,
The longing look alone on you.

Thus, while the Sun sinks down to rest
Far in the regions of the west,
Though to the vale no parting beam
Be given, not one memorial gleam,
A lingering light he fondly throws
On the dear hills where first he rose.

1786.

II.

WRITTEN IN VERY EARLY YOUTH

CALM is all nature as a resting wheel.
The kine are couched upon the dewy grass ;
The horse alone, seen dimly as I pass,
Is cropping audibly his later meal :
Dark is the ground ; a slumber seems to steal
O'er vale, and mountain, and the starless sky.
Now, in this blank of things, a harmony,
Home-felt, and home-created, comes to heal
That grief for which the senses still supply
Fresh food ; for only then, when memory
Is hushed, am I at rest. My Friends ! restrain
Those busy cares that would allay my pain ;
Oh ! leave me to myself, nor let me feel
The officious touch that makes me droop again.

B

III.

AN EVENING WALK.

ADDRESSED TO A YOUNG LADY.

General Sketch of the Lakes—Author's regret of his youth which was passed amongst them—Short description of Noon—Cascade—Noon-tide Retreat—Precipice and sloping Lights—Face of Nature as the Sun declines—Mountain-farm, and the Cock—Slate-quarry—Sunset—Superstition of the Country connected with that moment—Swans—Female Beggar—Twilight-sounds—Western Lights—Spirits—Night—Moonlight—Hope—Night-sounds—Conclusion.

FAR from my dearest Friend, 'tis mine to rove
Through bare grey dell, high wood, and pastoral cove;
Where Derwent rests, and listens to the roar
That stuns the tremulous cliffs of high Lodore;
Where peace to Grasmere's lonely island leads,
To willowy hedge-rows, and to emerald meads;
Leads to her bridge, rude church, and cottaged
grounds,

Her rocky sheepwalks, and her woodland bounds;
Where, undisturbed by winds, Winander* sleeps
'Mid clustering isles, and holly-sprinkled steeps;
Where twilight glens endear my Esthwaite's shore,
And memory of departed pleasures, more.

Fair scenes, erewhile, I taught, a happy child,
The echoes of your rocks my carols wild:
The spirit sought not then, in cherished sadness,
A cloudy substitute for failing gladness.
In youth's keen eye the livelong day was bright,
The sun at morning, and the stars at night,
Alike, when first the bittern's hollow bill
Was heard, or woodcocks† roamed the moonlight
hill.

In thoughtless gaiety I coursed the plain,
And hope itself was all I knew of pain;
For then, the inexperienced heart would beat
At times, while young Content forsook her seat,
And wild Impatience, pointing upward, showed,
Through passes yet unreached, a brighter road.
Alas! the idle tale of man is found
Depicted in the dial's moral round;
Hope with reflection blends her social rays
To gild the total tablet of his days;
Yet still, the sport of some malignant power,
He knows but from its shade the present hour.

* These lines are only applicable to the middle part of that lake.

† In the beginning of winter, these mountains are frequented by woodcocks, which in dark nights retire into the woods.

But why, ungrateful, dwell on idle pain?
To show what pleasures yet to me remain,
Say, will my Friend, with unreluctant ear,
The history of a poet's evening hear?

When, in the south, the wan noon, brooding still,
Breathed a pale steam around the glaring hill,
And shades of deep-embattled clouds were seen,
Spotting the northern cliffs with lights between;
When crowding cattle, checked by rails that make
A fence far stretched into the shallow lake,
Lashed the cool water with their restless tails,
Or from high points of rock looked out for fanning
gales;
When school-boys stretched their length upon the
green;
And round the broad-spread oak, a glimmering
scene,

In the rough fern-clad park, the herded deer
Shook the still-twinkling tail and glancing ear;
When horses in the sunburnt intake* stood,
And vainly eyed below the tempting flood,
Or tracked the passenger, in mute distress,
With forward neck the closing gate to press—
Then, while I wandered where the huddling rill
Brightens with water-breaks the hollow ghyll†
As by enchantment, an obscure retreat
Opened at once, and stayed my devious feet.
While thick above the rill the branches close,
In rocky basin its wild waves repose,
Inverted shrubs, and moss of gloomy green,
Cling from the rocks, with pale wood-weeds be-
tween;

And its own twilight softens the whole scene,
Save where aloft the subtle sunbeams shine
On withered briars that o'er the crags recline;
Save where, with sparkling foam, a small cascade
Illumines, from within, the leafy shade;
Beyond, along the vista of the brook,
Where antique roots its bustling course o'erlook,
The eye reposes on a secret bridge‡
Half grey, half shagged with ivy to its ridge;
There, bending o'er the stream, the listless swain
Lingers behind his disappearing wain.
—Did Sabine grace adorn my living line,
Blandusia's praise, wild stream, should yield to
thine!

* The word intake is local, and signifies a mountain-inclosure.

† Ghyll is also, I believe, a term confined to this country: ghyll, and dingle, have the same meaning.

‡ The reader who has made the tour of this country, will recognise, in this description, the features which characterise the lower waterfall in the grounds of Rydal.

Never shall ruthless minister of death
 'Mid thy soft glooms the glittering steel unsheath;
 No goblets shall, for thee, be crowned with flowers,
 No kid with piteous outcry thrill thy bowers;
 The mystic shapes that by thy margin rove
 A more benignant sacrifice approve—
 A mind, that, in a calm angelic mood
 Of happy wisdom, meditating good,
 Beholds, of all from her high powers required,
 Much done, and much designed, and more desired,—
 Harmonious thoughts, a soul by truth refined,
 Entire affection for all human kind.

Dear Brook, farewell! To-morrow's noon again
 Shall hide me, wooing long thy wildwood strain;
 But now the sun has gained his western road,
 And eve's mild hour invites my steps abroad.

While, near the midway cliff, the silvered kite
 In many a whistling circle wheels her flight;
 Slant watery lights, from parting clouds, apace
 Travel along the precipice's base;
 Cheering its naked waste of scattered stone,
 By lichens grey, and scanty moss, o'ergrown;
 Where scarce the foxglove peeps, or thistle's beard;
 And restless stone-chat, all day long, is heard.

How pleasant, as the sun declines, to view
 The spacious landscape change in form and hue!
 Here, vanish, as in mist, before a flood
 Of bright obscurity, hill, lawn, and wood;
 There, objects, by the searching beams betrayed,
 Come forth, and here retire in purple shade;
 Even the white stems of birch, the cottage white,
 Soften their glare before the mellow light;
 The skiffs, at anchor where with umbrage wide
 Yon chestnuts half the latticed boat-house hide,
 Shed from their sides, that face the sun's slant beam,
 Strong flakes of radiance on the tremulous stream:
 Raised by yon travelling flock, a dusty cloud
 Mounts from the road, and spreads its moving
 shroud;
 The shepherd, all involved in wreaths of fire,
 Now shows a shadowy speck, and now is lost entire.

Into a gradual calm the breezes sink,
 A blue rim borders all the lake's still brink;
 There doth the twinkling aspen's foliage sleep,
 And insects clothe, like dust, the glassy deep:
 And now, on every side, the surface breaks
 Into blue spots, and slowly lengthening streaks;
 Here, plots of sparkling water tremble bright
 With thousand thousand twinkling points of light;
 There, waves that, hardly weltering, die away,

Tip their smooth ridges with a softer ray;
 And now the whole wide lake in deep repose
 Is hushed, and like a burnished mirror glows,
 Save where, along the shady western marge,
 Coasts, with industrious oar, the charcoal barge.

Their panniered train a group of potters goad,
 Winding from side to side up the steep road;
 The peasant, from yon cliff of fearful edge
 Shot, down the headlong path darts with his sledge;
 Bright beams the lonely mountain-horse illumine
 Feeding 'mid purple heath, "green rings*," and
 broom;

While the sharp slope the slackened team confounds,
 Downward the ponderous timber-wain resounds;
 In foamy breaks the rill, with merry song,
 Dashed o'er the rough rock, lightly leaps along;
 From lonesome chapel at the mountain's feet,
 Three humble bells their rustic chime repeat;
 Sounds from the water-side the hammered boat;
 And *blasted* quarry thunders, heard remote!

Even here, amid the sweep of endless woods,
 Blue pomp of lakes, high cliffs, and falling floods,
 Not undelightful are the simplest charms,
 Found by the grassy door of mountain-farms.

Sweetly ferocious†, round his native walks,
 Pride of his sister-wives, the monarch stalks;
 Spur-clad his nervous feet, and firm his tread;
 A crest of purple tops the warrior's head.
 Bright sparks his black and rolling eye-ball hurls
 Afar, his tail he closes and unfurls;
 On tiptoe reared, he strains his clarion throat,
 Threatened by faintly-answering farms remote:
 Again with his shrill voice the mountain rings,
 While, flapped with conscious pride, resound his
 wings!

Where, mixed with graceful birch, the sombre
 pine
 And yew-tree o'er the silver rocks recline;
 I love to mark the quarry's moving trains,
 Dwarf panniered steeds, and men, and numerous
 wains:
 How busy all the enormous hive within,
 While Echo dallies with its various din!
 Some (hear you not their chisels' clinking sound?)

* "Vivid rings of green." — GREENWOOD'S POEM ON SHOOTING.

† "Dolcemente feroce." — TASSO. — In this description of the cock, I remembered a spirited one of the same animal in L'Agriculture, ou Les Géorgiques Françaises, of M. Rossuet.

Toil, small as pigmies in the gulf profound ;
 Some, dim between the lofty cliffs descried,
 O'erwalk the slender plank from side to side ;
 These, by the pale-blue rocks that ceaseless ring,
 In airy baskets hanging, work and sing.

Just where a cloud above the mountain rears
 An edge all flame, the broadening sun appears ;
 A long blue bar its ægis orb divides,
 And breaks the spreading of its golden tides ;
 And now that orb has touched the purple steep
 Whose softened image penetrates the deep.
 'Cross the calm lake's blue shades the cliffs aspire,
 With towers and woods, a "prospect all on fire ;"
 While coves and secret hollows, through a ray
 Of fainter gold, a purple gleam betray.
 Each slip of lawn the broken rocks between
 Shines in the light with more than earthly green :
 Deep yellow beams the scattered stems illumine,
 Far in the level forest's central gloom :
 Waving his hat, the shepherd, from the vale,
 Directs his winding dog the cliffs to scale,—
 The dog, loud barking, 'mid the glittering rocks,
 Hunts, where his master points, the intercepted
 flocks.

Where oaks o'erhang the road the radiance shoots
 On tawny earth, wild weeds, and twisted roots ;
 The druid-stones a brightened ring unfold ;
 And all the babbling brooks are liquid gold ;
 Sunk to a curve, the day-star lessens still,
 Gives one bright glance, and drops behind the hill *.

In these secluded vales, if village fame,
 Confirmed by hoary hairs, belief may claim ;
 When up the hills, as now, retired the light,
 Strange apparitions mocked the shepherd's sight.

The form appears of one that spurs his steed
 Midway along the hill with desperate speed ;
 Unhurt pursues his lengthened flight, while all
 Attend, at every stretch, his headlong fall.
 Anon, appears a brave, a gorgeous show
 Of horsemen-shadows moving to and fro ;
 At intervals imperial banners stream,
 And now the van reflects the solar beam ;
 The rear through iron brown betrays a sullen gleam.
 While silent stands the admiring crowd below,
 Silent the visionary warriors go,
 Winding in ordered pomp their upward way †
 Till the last banner of the long array

Has disappeared, and every trace is fled
 Of splendor—save the beacon's spiry head
 Tipt with eve's latest gleam of burning red.

Now, while the solemn evening shadows sail,
 On slowly-waving pinions, down the vale ;
 And, fronting the bright west, yon oak entwines,
 Its darkening boughs and leaves, in stronger lines ;
 'Tis pleasant near the tranquil lake to stray
 Where, winding on along some secret bay,
 The swan uplifts his chest, and backward flings
 His neck, a varying arch, between his towering
 wings :

The eye that marks the gliding creature sees
 How graceful, pride can be, and how majestic, ease.
 While tender cares and mild domestic loves
 With furtive watch pursue her as she moves,
 The female with a meeker charm succeeds,
 And her brown little-ones around her leads,
 Nibbling the water lilies as they pass,
 Or playing wanton with the floating grass.
 She, in a mother's care, her beauty's pride
 Forgetting, calls the wearied to her side ;
 Alternately they mount her back, and rest
 Close by her mantling wings' embraces prest.

Long may they float upon this flood serene ;
 Theirs be these holms untrodden, still, and green,
 Where leafy shades fence off the blustering gale,
 And breathes in peace the lily of the vale !
 Yon isle, which feels not even the milk-maid's feet,
 Yet hears her song, "by distance made moresweet,"
 Yon isle conceals their home, their hut-like bower ;
 Green water-rushes overspread the floor ;
 Long grass and willows form the woven wall,
 And swings above the roof the poplar tall.
 Thence issuing often with unwieldy stalk,
 They crush with broad black feet their flowery
 walk ;
 Or, from the neighbouring water, hear at morn
 The hound, the horse's tread, and mellow horn ;
 Involve their serpent-necks in changeful rings,
 Rolled wantonly between their slippery wings,
 Or, starting up with noise and rude delight,
 Force half upon the wave their cumbrous flight.

Fair Swan ! by all a mother's joys caressed,
 Haply some wretch has eyed, and called thee
 blessed ;
 When with her infants, from some shady seat
 By the lake's edge, she rose—to face the noontide
 heat ;
 Or taught their limbs along the dusty road
 A few short steps to totter with their load.

* From Thomson.

† See a description of an appearance of this kind in
 Clark's Survey of the Lakes, accompanied by vouchers of
 its veracity, that may amuse the reader.

I see her now, denied to lay her head,
 On cold blue nights, in hut or straw-built shed,
 Turn to a silent smile their sleepy cry,
 By pointing to the gliding moon on high.
 —When low-hung clouds each star of summer hide,
 And fireless are the vallies far and wide,
 Where the brook brawls along the public road
 Dark with bat-haunted ashes stretching broad,
 Oft has she taught them on her lap to lay
 The shining glow-worm ; or, in heedless play,
 Toss it from hand to hand, disquieted ;
 While others, not unseen, are free to shed
 Green unmolested light upon their mossy bed.

Oh ! when the sleety showers her path assail,
 And like a torrent roars the headstrong gale ;
 No more her breath can thaw their fingers cold,
 Their frozen arms her neck no more can fold ;
 Weak roof a cowering form two babes to shield,
 And faint the fire a dying heart can yield !
 Press the sad kiss, fond mother ! vainly fears
 Thy flooded cheek to wet them with its tears ;
 No tears can chill them, and no bosom warms,
 Thy breast their death-bed, confined in thine arms !

Sweet are the sounds that mingle from afar,
 Heard by calm lakes, as peeps the folding star,
 Where the duck dabbles 'mid the rustling sedge,
 And feeding pike starts from the water's edge,
 Or the swan stirs the reeds, his neck and bill
 Wetting, that drip upon the water still ;
 And heron, as resounds the trodden shore,
 Shoots upward, darting his long neck before.

Now, with religious awe, the farewell light
 Blends with the solemn colouring of night ;
 'Mid groves of clouds that crest the mountain's brow,
 And round the west's proud lodge their shadows
 throw,

Like Una shining on her gloomy way,
 The half-seen form of Twilight roams astray ;
 Shedding, through paly loop-holes mild and small,
 Gleams that upon the lake's still bosom fall ;
 Soft o'er the surface creep those lustres pale
 Tracking the motions of the fitful gale.
 With restless interchange at once the bright
 Wins on the shade, the shade upon the light.
 No favoured eye was e'er allowed to gaze
 On lovelier spectacle in faery days ;
 When gentle Spirits urged a sportive chase,
 Brushing with lucid wands the water's face ;
 While music, stealing round the glimmering deeps,
 Charmed the tall circle of the enchanted steep.
 —The lights are vanished from the watery plains :

No wreck of all the pageantry remains.
 Unheeded night has overcome the vales :
 On the dark earth the wearied vision fails ;
 The latest lingerer of the forest train,
 The lone black fir, forsakes the faded plain ;
 Last evening sight, the cottage smoke, no more,
 Lost in the thickened darkness, glimmers hoar ;
 And, towering from the sullen dark-brown mere,
 Like a black wall, the mountain-steeps appear.
 —Now o'er the soothed accordant heart we feel
 A sympathetic twilight slowly steal,
 And ever, as we fondly muse, we find
 The soft gloom deepening on the tranquil mind.
 Stay ! pensive, sadly-pleasing visions, stay !
 Ah no ! as fades the vale, they fade away :
 Yet still the tender, vacant gloom remains ;
 Still the cold cheek its shuddering tear retains.

The bird, who ceased, with fading light, to thread
 Silent the hedge or steamy rivulet's bed,
 From his grey re-appearing tower shall soon
 Salute with gladsome note the rising moon,
 While with a hoary light she frosts the ground,
 And pours a deeper blue to Æther's bound ;
 Pleased, as she moves, her pomp of clouds to fold
 In robes of azure, fleecy-white, and gold.

Above yon eastern hill, where darkness broods
 O'er all its vanished dells, and lawns, and woods ;
 Where but a mass of shade the sight can trace,
 Even now she shews, half-veiled, her lovely face :
 Across the gloomy valley flings her light,
 Far to the western slopes with hamlets white ;
 And gives, where woods the chequered upland strew,
 To the green corn of summer, autumn's hue.

Thus Hope, first pouring from her blessed horn
 Her dawn, far lovelier than the moon's own
 morn,
 'Till higher mounted, strives in vain to cheer
 The weary hills, impervious, blackening near ;
 Yet does she still, undaunted, throw the while
 On darling spots remote her tempting smile.

Even now she decks for me a distant scene,
 (For dark and broad the gulf of time between)
 Gilding that cottage with her fondest ray,
 (Sole bourn, sole wish, sole object of my way ;
 How fair its lawns and sheltering woods appear !
 How sweet its streamlet murmurs in mine ear !)
 Where we, my Friend, to happy days shall rise,
 'Till our small share of hardly-paining sighs
 (For sighs will ever trouble human breath)
 Creep hushed into the tranquil breast of death.

But now the clear bright Moon her zenith gains,
 And, rimy without speck, extend the plains :
 The deepest cleft the mountain's front displays
 Scarce hides a shadow from her searching rays ;
 From the dark-blue faint silvery threads divide
 The hills, while gleams below the azure tide ;
 Time softly treads ; throughout the landscape
 breathes

A peace enlivened, not disturbed, by wreaths
 Of charcoal-smoke, that o'er the fallen wood,
 Steal down the hill, and spread along the flood.

The song of mountain-streams, unheard by day,
 Now hardly heard, beguiles my homeward way.
 Air listens, like the sleeping water, still,
 To catch the spiritual music of the hill,
 Broke only by the slow clock tolling deep,
 Or shout that wakes the ferry-man from sleep,
 The echoed hoof nearing the distant shore,
 The boat's first motion—made with dashing oar ;
 Sound of closed gate, across the water borne,
 Hurrying the timid hare through rustling corn ;
 The sportive outcry of the mocking owl ;
 And at long intervals the mill-dog's howl ;
 The distant forge's swinging thump profound ;
 Or yell, in the deep woods, of lonely hound.

1787, 8, & 9.

IV.

LINES

WRITTEN WHILE SAILING IN A BOAT AT EVENING.

How richly glows the water's breast
 Before us, tinged with evening hues,
 While, facing thus the crimson west,
 The boat her silent course pursues !
 And see how dark the backward stream !
 A little moment past so smiling !
 And still, perhaps, with faithless gleam,
 Some other loiterers beguiling.

Such views the youthful Bard allure ;
 But, heedless of the following gloom,
 He deems their colours shall endure
 Till peace go with him to the tomb.
 —And let him nurse his fond deceit,
 And what if he must die in sorrow !
 Who would not cherish dreams so sweet,
 Though grief and pain may come to-morrow ?

1789.

V.

REMEMBRANCE OF COLLINS,

COMPOSED UPON THE THAMES NEAR RICHMOND.

GLIDE gently, thus for ever glide,
 O Thames ! that other bards may see
 As lovely visions by thy side
 As now, fair river ! come to me.
 O glide, fair stream ! for ever so,
 Thy quiet soul on all bestowing,
 Till all our minds for ever flow
 As thy deep waters now are flowing.

Vain thought !—Yet be as now thou art,
 That in thy waters may be seen
 The image of a poet's heart,
 How bright, how solemn, how serene !
 Such as did once the Poet bless,
 Who murmuring here a later * ditty,
 Could find no refuge from distress
 But in the milder grief of pity.

Now let us, as we float along,
 For *him* suspend the dashing oar ;
 And pray that never child of song
 May know that Poet's sorrows more.
 How calm ! how still ! the only sound,
 The dripping of the oar suspended !
 —The evening darkness gathers round
 By virtue's holiest Powers attended.

1789.

VI.

DESCRIPTIVE SKETCHES

TAKEN

DURING A PEDESTRIAN TOUR AMONG THE ALPS.

TO

THE REV. ROBERT JONES,

FELLOW OF ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

DEAR SIR,

HOWEVER desirous I might have been of giving you proofs of the high place you hold in my esteem, I should have been cautious of wounding your delicacy by thus publicly addressing you, had not the circumstance of our having been companions among the Alps, seemed to give this dedication a propriety sufficient to do away any scruples which your modesty might otherwise have suggested.

* Collins's Ode on the death of Thomson, the last written, I believe, of the poems which were published during his life-time. This Ode is also alluded to in the next stanza.

In inscribing this little work to you, I consult my heart. You know well how great is the difference between two companions lolling in a post-chaise, and two travellers plodding slowly along the road, side by side, each with his little knapsack of necessaries upon his shoulders. How much more of heart between the two latter!

I am happy in being conscious that I shall have one reader who will approach the conclusion of these few pages with regret. You they must certainly interest, in reminding you of moments to which you can hardly look back without a pleasure not the less dear from a shade of melancholy. You will meet with few images without recollecting the spot where we observed them together; consequently, whatever is feeble in my design, or spiritless in my colouring, will be amply supplied by your own memory.

With still greater propriety I might have inscribed to you a description of some of the features of your native mountains, through which we have wandered together, in the same manner, with so much pleasure. But the sea-sunsets, which give such splendour to the vale of Clwyd, Snowdon, the chair of Idris, the quiet village of Bethgeleert, Menai and her Druids, the Alpine steeps of the Conway, and the still more interesting windings of the wizard stream of the Dee, remain yet untouched. Apprehensive that my pencil may never be exercised on these subjects, I cannot let slip this opportunity of thus publicly assuring you with how much affection and esteem

I am, dear Sir,

Most sincerely yours,

W. WORDSWORTH.

London, 1793.

Happiness (if she had been to be found on earth) among the charms of Nature—Pleasures of the pedestrian Traveller—Author crosses France to the Alps—Present state of the Grande Chartreuse—Lake of Como—Time, Sunset—Same Scene, Twilight—Same Scene, Morning; its voluptuous Character; Old man and forest-cottage music—River Tusa—Via Mala and Grison Gipsy—Skellenen-thal—Lake of Uri—Stormy sunset—Chapel of William Tell—Force of local emotion—Chamois-chaser—View of the higher Alps—manner of life of a Swiss mountaineer, interspersed with views of the higher Alps—Golden age of the Alps—Life and views continued—Ranz des Vaches, famous Swiss Air—Abbey of Einsiedlen and its pilgrims—Valley of Chamouny—Mont Blanc—Slavery of Savoy—Influence of liberty on cottage-happiness—France—Wish for the Extirpation of slavery—Conclusion.

WERE there, below, a spot of holy ground
Where from distress a refuge might be found,
And solitude prepare the soul for heaven;
Sure, nature's God that spot to man had given
Where falls the purple morning far and wide
In flakes of light upon the mountain side;
Where with loud voice the power of water shakes
The leafy wood, or sleeps in quiet lakes.

Yet not unrecompensed the man shall roam,
Who at the call of summer quits his home,

And plods through some wide realm o'er vale and height,
Though seeking only holiday delight;
At least, not owing to himself an aim
To which the sage would give a prouder name.
No gains too cheaply earned his fancy cloy,
Though every passing zephyr whispers joy;
Brisk toil, alternating with ready ease,
Feeds the clear current of his sympathies.
For him sod-seats the cottage-door adorn;
And peeps the far-off spire, his evening bourn!
Dear is the forest frowning o'er his head,
And dear the velvet green-sward to his tread:
Moves there a cloud o'er mid-day's flaming eye?
Upward he looks—"and calls it luxury!"
Kind Nature's charities his steps attend;
In every babbling brook he finds a friend;
While chastening thoughts of sweetest use, bestowed
By wisdom, moralise his pensive road.
Host of his welcome inn, the noon-tide bower,
To his spare meal he calls the passing poor;
He views the sun uplift his golden fire,
Or sink, with heart alive like Memnon's lyre*;
Blesses the moon that comes with kindly ray,
To light him shaken by his rugged way.
Back from his sight no bashful children steal;
He sits a brother at the cottage-meal;
His humble looks no shy restraint impart;
Around him plays at will the virgin heart.
While unsuspended wheels the village dance,
The maidens eye him with enquiring glance,
Much wondering by what fit of crazing care,
Or desperate love, bewildered, he came there.

A hope, that prudence could not then approve,
That clung to Nature with a truant's love,
O'er Gallia's wastes of corn my footsteps led;
Her fields of road-elm, high above my head
In long-drawn vista, rustling in the breeze;
Or where her pathways straggle as they please
By lonely farms and secret villages.
But lo! the Alps ascending white in air,
Toy with the sun and glitter from afar.

And now, emerging from the forest's gloom,
I greet thee, Chartreuse, while I mourn thy doom.
Whither is fled that Power whose frown severe
Awd sober Reason till she crouched in fear?
That Silence, once in deathlike fetters bound,
Chains that were loosened only by the sound
Of holy rites chanted in measured round?

* The lyre of Memnon is reported to have emitted melancholy or cheerful tones, as it was touched by the sun's evening or morning rays.

—The voice of blasphemy the fane alarms,
The cloister startles at the gleam of arms.
The thundering tube the aged angler hears,
Bent o'er the groaning flood that sweeps away his tears.

Cloud-piercing pine-trees nod their troubled heads,
Spires, rocks, and lawns a browner night o'er-
spreads ;

Strong terror checks the female peasant's sighs,
And start the astonished shades at female eyes.
From Bruno's forest screams the affrighted jay,
And slow the insulted eagle wheels away.
A viewless flight of laughing Demons mock
The Cross, by angels planted * on the aerial rock.
The "parting Genius" sighs with hollow breath
Along the mystic streams of Life and Death †.
Swelling the outcry dull, that long resounds
Portentous through her old woods' trackless
bounds,

Vallombre ‡, 'mid her falling fanes, deplores,
For ever broke, the sabbath of her bowers.

More pleased, my foot the hidden margin roves
Of Como, bosomed deep in chestnut groves.

No meadows thrown between, the giddy steeps
Tower, bare or sylvan, from the narrow deeps.
—To towns, whose shades of no rude noise com-
plain,

From ringing team apart and grating wain—
To flat-roofed towns, that touch the water's bound,
Or lurk in woody sunless glens profound,
Or, from the bending rocks, obtrusive cling,
And o'er the whitened wave their shadows fling—
The pathway leads, as round the steeps it twines ;
And Silence loves its purple roof of vines.

The loitering traveller hence, at evening, sees
From rock-hewn steps the sail between the trees ;
Or marks, 'mid opening cliffs, fair dark-eyed maids
Tend the small harvest of their garden glades ;
Or stops the solemn mountain-shades to view
Stretch o'er the pictured mirror broad and blue,
And track the yellow lights from steep to steep,
As up the opposing hills they slowly creep.
Aloft, here, half a village shines, arrayed
In golden light ; half hides itself in shade :
While, from amid the darkened roofs, the spire,
Restlessly flashing, seems to mount like fire :
There, all unshaded, blazing forests throw
Rich golden verdure on the lake below.

* Alluding to crosses seen on the tops of the spiry rocks
of Chartreuse, which have every appearance of being
inaccessible.

† Names of rivers at the Chartreuse.

‡ Name of one of the valleys of the Chartreuse.

Slow glides the sail along the illumined shore,
And steals into the shade the lazy oar ;
Soft bosoms breathe around contagious sighs.
And amorous music on the water dies.

How blest, delicious scene ! the eye that greets
Thy open beauties, or thy lone retreats ;
Beholds the unwearied sweep of wood that scales
Thy cliffs ; the endless waters of thy vales ;
Thy lowly cots that sprinkle all the shore,
Each with its household boat beside the door ;
Thy torrents shooting from the clear-blue sky ;
Thy towns, that cleave, like swallows' nests, on
high ;

That glimmer hoar in eve's last light, descried
Dim from the twilight water's shaggy side,
Whence lutes and voices down the enchanted
woods

Steal, and compose the oar-forgotten floods ;
—Thy lake, that, streaked or dappled, blue or
grey,

'Mid smoking woods gleams hid from morning's ray
Slow-travelling down the western hills, to' enfold
Its green-tinged margin in a blaze of gold ;
Thy glittering steeples, whence the matin bell
Calls forth the woodman from his desert cell,
And quickens the blithe sound of oars that pass
Along the steaming lake, to early mass.
But now farewell to each and all—adieu
To every charm, and last and chief to you,
Ye lovely maidens that in noontide shade
Rest near your little plots of wheaten glade ;
To all that binds the soul in powerless trance,
Lip-dewing song, and ringlet-tossing dance ;
Where sparkling eyes and breaking smiles illumine
The sylvan cabin's lute-enlivened gloom.
—Alas ! the very murmur of the streams
Breathes o'er the failing soul voluptuous dreams,
While Slavery, forcing the sunk mind to dwell
On joys that might disgrace the captive's cell,
Her shameless timbrel shakes on Como's marge,
And lures from bay to bay the vocal barge.

Yet are thy softer arts with power indued
To soothe and cheer the poor man's solitude.
By silent cottage-doors, the peasant's home
Left vacant for the day, I loved to roam.
But once I pierced the mazes of a wood
In which a cabin undeserted stood ;
There an old man an olden measure scanned
On a rude viol touched with withered hand.
As lambs or fawns in April clustering lie
Under a hoary oak's thin canopy,
Stretched at his feet, with stedfast upward eye,

His children's children listened to the sound ;
—A Hermit with his family around !

But let us hence ; for fair Locarno smiles
Embowered in walnut slopes and citron isles :
Or seek at eve the banks of Tusa's stream,
Where, 'mid dim towers and woods, her * waters
gleam.

From the bright wave, in solemn gloom, retire
The dull-red steeps, and, darkening still, aspire
To where afar rich orange lustres glow
Round undistinguished clouds, and rocks, and
snow :

Or, led where Via Mala's chasms confine
The indignant waters of the infant Rhine,
Hang o'er the abyss, whose else impervious gloom
His burning eyes with fearful light illumine.

The mind condemned, without reprieve, to go
O'er life's long deserts with its charge of woe,
With sad congratulation joins the train
Where beasts and men together o'er the plain
Move on—a mighty caravan of pain :
Hope, strength, and courage, social suffering
brings,

Freshening the wilderness with shades and springs.
—There be whose lot far otherwise is cast :
Sole human tenant of the piny waste,
By choice or doom a gipsy wanders here,
A nursling babe her only comforter ;
Lo, where she sits beneath yon shaggy rock,
A cowering shape half hid in curling smoke !

When lightning among clouds and mountain-
snows
Predominates, and darkness comes and goes,
And the fierce torrent, at the flashes broad
Starts, like a horse, beside the glaring road—
She seeks a covert from the battering shower
In the roofed bridge † ; the bridge, in that dread
hour,
Itself all trembling at the torrent's power.

Nor is she more at ease on some *still* night,
When not a star supplies the comfort of its light ;
Only the waning moon hangs dull and red
Above a melancholy mountain's head,
Then sets. In total gloom the Vagrant sighs,
Stoops her sick head, and shuts her weary eyes ;

* The river along whose banks you descend in crossing
the Alps by the Simplon Pass.

† Most of the bridges among the Alps are of wood, and
covered : these bridges have a heavy appearance, and
rather injure the effect of the scenery in some places.

Or on her fingers counts the distant clock,
Or, to the drowsy crow of midnight cock,
Listens, or quakes while from the forest's gulf
Howls near and nearer yet the famished wolf.

From the green vale of Urseren smooth and wide
Descend we now, the maddened Reuss our guide ;
By rocks that, shutting out the blessed day,
Cling tremblingly to rocks as loose as they ;
By cells * upon whose image, while he prays,
The kneeling peasant scarcely dares to gaze ;
By many a votive death-cross † planted near,
And watered duly with the pious tear,
That faded silent from the upward eye
Unmoved with each rude form of peril nigh ;
Fixed on the anchor left by Him who saves
Alike in whelming snows, and roaring waves.

But soon a peopled region on the sight
Opens—a little world of calm delight ;
Where mists, suspended on the expiring gale,
Spread rooflike o'er the deep secluded vale,
And beams of evening slipping in between,
Gently illuminate a sober scene :—
Here, on the brown wood-cottages ‡ they sleep,
There, over rock or sloping pasture creep.
On as we journey, in clear view displayed,
The still vale lengthens underneath its shade
Of low-hung vapour : on the freshened mead
The green light sparkles ;—the dim bowers recede.
While pastoral pipes and streams the landscape lull,
And bells of passing mules that tinkle dull,
In solemn shapes before the admiring eye
Dilated hang the misty pines on high,
Huge convent domes with pinnacles and towers,
And antique castles seen through gleamy showers.

From such romantic dreams, my soul, awake !
To sterner pleasure, where, by Uri's lake
In Nature's pristine majesty outspread,
Winds neither road nor path for foot to tread :
The rocks rise naked as a wall, or stretch,
Far o'er the water, hung with groves of beech ;
Aerial pines from loftier steeps ascend,
Nor stop but where creation seems to end.
Yet here and there, if mid the savage scene
Appears a scanty plot of smiling green,

* The Catholic religion prevails here : these cells are, as
is well known, very common in the Catholic countries,
planted, like the Roman tombs, along the road side.

† Crosses, commemorative of the deaths of travellers
by the fall of snow, and other accidents, are very common
along this dreadful road.

‡ The houses in the more retired Swiss valleys are all
built of wood.

Up from the lake a zigzag path will creep
 To reach a small wood-hut hung boldly on the steep.
 —Before those thresholds (never can they know
 The face of traveller passing to and fro,)
 No peasant leans upon his pole, to tell
 For whom at morning tolled the funeral bell ;
 Their watch-dog ne'er his angry bark foregoes,
 Touched by the beggar's moan of human woes ;
 The shady porch ne'er offered a cool seat
 To pilgrims overcome by summer's heat.
 Yet thither the world's business finds its way
 At times, and tales unsought beguile the day,
 And *there* are those fond thoughts which Solitude,
 However stern, is powerless to exclude.
 There doth the maiden watch her lover's sail
 Approaching, and upbraid the tardy gale ;
 At midnight listens till his parting oar,
 And its last echo, can be heard no more.

And what if ospreys, cormorants, herons cry,
 Amid tempestuous vapours driving by,
 Or hovering over wastes too bleak to rear
 That common growth of earth, the foodful ear ;
 Where the green apple shrivels on the spray,
 And pines the unripened pear in summer's kindest
 ray ;

Contentment shares the desolate domain
 With Independence, child of high Disdain.
 Exulting 'mid the winter of the skies,
 Shy as the jealous chamois, Freedom flies,
 And grasps by fits her sword, and often eyes ;
 And sometimes, as from rock to rock she bounds
 The Patriot nymph starts at imagined sounds,
 And, wildly pausing, oft she hangs aghast,
 Whether some old Swiss air hath checked her haste
 Or thrill of Spartan life is caught between the blast.

Swoln with incessant rains from hour to hour,
 All day the floods a deepening murmur pour :
 The sky is veiled, and every cheerful sight :
 Dark is the region as with coming night ;
 But what a sudden burst of overpowering light !
 Triumphant on the bosom of the storm,
 Glances the wheeling eagle's glorious form !
 Eastward, in long perspective glittering, shine
 The wood-crowned cliffs that o'er the lake recline ;
 Those lofty cliffs a hundred streams unfold,
 At once to pillars turned that flame with gold :
 Behind his sail the peasant shrinks, to shun
 The *west*, that burns like one dilated sun,
 A crucible of mighty compass, felt
 By mountains, glowing till they seem to melt.

But, lo ! the boatman, overawed, before
 The pictured fane of Tell suspends his oar ;

Confused the Marathonian tale appears,
 While his eyes sparkle with heroic tears.
 And who, that walks where men of ancient days
 Have wrought with godlike arm the deeds of praise
 Feels not the spirit of the place control,
 Or rouse and agitate his labouring soul ?
 Say, who, by thinking on Canadian hills,
 Or wild Aosta lulled by Alpine rills,
 On Zutphen's plain ; or on that highland dell,
 Through which rough Garry cleaves his way, can tell
 What high resolves exalt the tenderest thought
 Of him whom passion rivets to the spot,
 Where breathed the gale that caught Wolfe's hap-
 piest sigh,
 And the last sunbeam fell on Bayard's eye ;
 Where bleeding Sidney from the cup retired,
 And glad Dundee in "faint huzzas" expired ?

But now with other mind I stand alone
 Upon the summit of this naked cone,
 And watch the fearless chamois-hunter chase
 His prey, through tracts abrupt of desolate space,
 *Through vacant worlds where Nature never gave
 A brook to murmur or a bough to wave,
 Which unsubstantial Phantoms sacred keep ;
 Thro' worlds where Life, and Voice, and Motion
 sleep ;
 Where silent Hours their death-like sway extend,
 Save when the avalanche breaks loose, to rend
 Its way with uproar, till the ruin, drowned
 In some dense wood or gulf of snow profound,
 Mocks the dull ear of Time with deaf abortive
 sound.

—'Tis his, while wandering on from height to
 height,
 To see a planet's pomp and steady light
 In the least star of scarce-appearing night ;
 While the pale moon moves near him, on the bound
 Of ether, shining with diminished round,
 And far and wide the icy summits blaze,
 Rejoicing in the glory of her rays :
 To him the day-star glitters small and bright,
 Shorn of its beams, insufferably white,
 And he can look beyond the sun, and view
 Those fast-receding depths of sable blue
 Flying till vision can no more pursue !
 —At once bewildering mists around him close,
 And cold and hunger are his least of woes ;
 The Demon of the snow, with angry roar
 Descending, shuts for aye his prison door.
 Soon with despair's whole weight his spirits sink ;

* For most of the images in the next sixteen verses, I
 am indebted to M. Raymond's interesting observations
 annexed to his translation of Coxe's Tour in Switzerland.

Bread has he none, the snow must be his drink ;
And, ere his eyes can close upon the day,
The eagle of the Alps o'ershades her prey.

Now couch thyself where, heard with fear afar,
Thunders through echoing pines the headlong Aar;
Or rather stay to taste the mild delights
Of pensive Underwalden's* pastoral heights.
—Is there who 'mid these awful wilds has seen
The native Genii walk the mountain green ?
Or heard, while other worlds their charms reveal,
Soft music o'er the ærial summit steal ?
While o'er the desert, answering every close,
Rich steam of sweetest perfume comes and goes.
—And sure there is a secret Power that reigns
Here, where no trace of man the spot profanes,
Nought but the *chalets*†, flat and bare, on high
Suspended 'mid the quiet of the sky ;
Or distant herds that pasturing upward creep,
And, not untended, climb the dangerous steep.
How still ! no irreligious sound or sight
Rouses the soul from her severe delight.
An idle voice the sabbath region fills
Of Deep that calls to Deep across the hills,
And with that voice accords the soothing sound
Of drowsy bells, for ever tinkling round ;
Faint wail of eagle melting into blue
Beneath the cliffs, and pine-woods' steady *sugh*‡ ;
The solitary heifer's deepened low ;
Or rumbling, heard remote, of falling snow.
All motions, sounds, and voices, far and nigh,
Blend in a music of tranquillity ;
Save when, a stranger seen below, the boy
Shouts from the echoing hills with savage joy.

When, from the sunny breast of open seas,
And bays with myrtle fringed, the southern breeze
Comes on to gladden April with the sight
Of green isles widening on each snow-clad height :
When shouts and lowing herds the valley fill,
And louder torrents stun the noon-tide hill,
The pastoral Swiss begin the cliffs to scale,
Leaving to silence the deserted vale ;
And like the Patriarchs in their simple age
Move, as the verdure leads, from stage to stage ;
High and more high in summer's heat they go,

* The people of this Canton are supposed to be of a more melancholy disposition than the other inhabitants of the Alps; this, if true, may proceed from their living more secluded.

† This picture is from the middle region of the Alps. *Chalets* are summer huts for the Swiss herdsmen.

‡ *Sugh*, a Scotch word expressive of the sound of the wind through the trees.

And hear the rattling thunder far below ;
Or steal beneath the mountains, half-deterred,
Where huge rocks tremble to the bellowing herd.

One I behold who, 'cross the foaming flood,
Leaps with a bound of graceful hardihood ;
Another high on that green ledge ;—he gained
The tempting spot with every sinew strained ;
And downward thence a knot of grass he throws,
Food for his beasts in time of winter snows.
—Far different life from what Tradition hoar
Transmits of happier lot in times of yore !
Then Summer lingered long ; and honey flowed
From out the rocks, the wild bees' safe abode :
Continual waters welling cheered the waste,
And plants were wholesome, now of deadly taste :
Nor Winter yet his frozen stores had piled,
Usurping where the fairest herbage smiled :
Nor Hunger driven the herds from pastures bare,
To climb the treacherous cliffs for scanty fare.
Then the milk-thistle flourished through the land,
And forced the full-sworn udder to demand,
Thrice every day, the pail and welcome hand.
Thus does the father to his children tell
Of banished bliss, by fancy loved too well.
Alas ! that human guilt provoked the rod
Of angry Nature to avenge her God.
Still, Nature, ever just, to him imparts
Joys only given to uncorrupted hearts.

'Tis morn : with gold the verdant mountain
glows ;
More high, the snowy peaks with hues of rose.
Far-stretched beneath the many-tinted hills,
A mighty waste of mist the valley fills,
A solemn sea ! whose billows wide around
Stand motionless, to awful silence bound :
Pines, on the coast, through mist their tops uprear,
That like to leaning masts of stranded ships appear.
A single chasm, a gulf of gloomy blue,
Gapes in the centre of the sea—and through
That dark mysterious gulf ascending, sound
Innumerable streams with roar profound.
Mount through the nearer vapours notes of birds,
And merry flageolet ; the low of herds,
The bark of dogs, the heifer's tinkling bell,
Talk, laughter, and perchance a church-tower knell:
Think not, the peasant from aloft has gazed
And heard with heart unmoved, with soul unraised:
Nor is his spirit less enrapt, nor less
Alive to independent happiness,
Then, when he lies, out-stretched, at even-tide
Upon the fragrant mountain's purple side :
For as the pleasures of his simple day

Beyond his native valley seldom stray,
Nought round its darling precincts can he find
But brings some past enjoyment to his mind ;
While Hope, reclining upon Pleasure's urn,
Binds her wild wreaths, and whispers his return.

Once, Man entirely free, alone and wild,
Was blest as free—for he was Nature's child.
He, all superior but his God disdained,
Walked none restraining, and by none restrained:
Confessed no law but what his reason taught,
Did all he wished, and wished but what he ought.
As man in his primeval dower arrayed
The image of his glorious Sire displayed,
Even so, by faithful Nature guarded, here
The traces of primeval Man appear ;
The simple dignity no forms debase ;
The eye sublime, and surly lion-grace :
The slave of none, of beasts alone the lord,
His book he prizes, nor neglects his sword ;
—Well taught by that to feel his rights, prepared
With this “ the blessings he enjoys to guard.”

And, as his native hills encircle ground
For many a marvellous victory renowned,
The work of Freedom daring to oppose,
With few in arms *, innumerable foes,
When to those famous fields his steps are led,
An unknown power connects him with the dead :
For images of other worlds are there ;
Awful the light, and holy is the air.
Fittingly, and in flashes, through his soul,
Like sun-lit tempests, troubled transports roll ;
His bosom heaves, his Spirit towers amain,
Beyond the senses and their little reign.

And oft, when that dread vision hath past by,
He holds with God himself communion high,
There where the peal of swelling torrents fills
The sky-roofed temple of the eternal hills ;
Or, when upon the mountain's silent brow
Reclined, he sees, above him and below,
Bright stars of ice and azure fields of snow ;
While needle peaks of granite shooting bare
Tremble in ever-varying tints of air.

* Alluding to several battles which the Swiss in very small numbers have gained over their oppressors, the house of Austria ; and, in particular, to one fought at Næffels near Glarus, where three hundred and thirty men are said to have defeated an army of between fifteen and twenty thousand Austrians. Scattered over the valley are to be found eleven stones, with this inscription, 1388, the year the battle was fought, marking out, as I was told upon the spot, the several places where the Austrians, attempting to make a stand, were repulsed anew.

And when a gathering weight of shadows brown
Falls on the valleys as the sun goes down ;
And Pikes, of darkness named and fear and
storms *,

Uplift in quiet their illumined forms,
In sea-like reach of prospect round him spread,
Tinged like an angel's smile all rosy red—
Awe in his breast with holiest love unites,
And the near heavens impart their own delights.

When downward to his winter hut he goes,
Dear and more dear the lessening circle grows ;
That hut which on the hills so oft employs
His thoughts, the central point of all his joys.
And as a swallow, at the hour of rest,
Peeps often ere she darts into her nest,
So to the homestead, where the grandsire tends
A little prattling child, he oft descends,
To glance a look upon the well-matched pair ;
Till storm and driving ice blockade him there.
There, safely guarded by the woods behind,
He hears the chiding of the baffled wind,
Hears Winter calling all his terrors round,
And, blest within himself, he shrinks not from the
sound.

Through Nature's vale his homely pleasures
glide,
Unstained by envy, discontent, and pride ;
The bound of all his vanity, to deck,
With one bright bell, a favourite heifer's neck ;
Well pleased upon some simple annual feast,
Remembered half the year and hoped the rest,
If dairy-produce, from his inner hoard,
Of thrice ten summers dignify the board.
—Alas ! in every clime a flying ray
Is all we have to cheer our wintry way ;
And here the unwilling mind may more than
trace
The general sorrows of the human race :
The churlish gales of penury, that blow
Cold as the north-wind o'er a waste of snow,
To them the gentle groups of bliss deny
That on the noon-day bank of leisure lie.
Yet more ;—compelled by Powers which only
deign

That *solitary* man disturb their reign,
Powers that support an unremitting strife
With all the tender charities of life,
Full oft the father, when his sons have grown
To manhood, seems their title to disown ;

* As Schreck-Horn, the pike of terror ; Wetter-Horn, the pike of storms, &c. &c.

And from his nest amid the storms of heaven
Drives, eagle-like, those sons as he was driven ;
With stern composure watches to the plain—
And never, eagle-like, beholds again !

When long-familiar joys are all resigned,
Why does their sad remembrance haunt the mind ?
Lo ! where through flat Batavia's willowy groves,
Or by the lazy Seine, the exile roves ;
O'er the curled waters Alpine measures swell,
And search the affections to their inmost cell ;
Sweet poison spreads along the listener's veins,
Turning past pleasures into mortal pains ;
Poison, which not a frame of steel can brave,
Bows his young head with sorrow to the grave.*

Gay lark of hope, thy silent song resume !
Ye flattering eastern lights, once more the hills
illumine !

Fresh gales and dews of life's delicious morn,
And thou, lost fragrance of the heart, return !
Alas ! the little joy to man allowed,
Fades like the lustre of an evening cloud ;
Or like the beauty in a flower installed,
Whose season was, and cannot be recalled.
Yet, when opprest by sickness, grief, or care,
And taught that pain is pleasure's natural heir,
We still confide in more than we can know ;
Death would be else the favourite friend of woe.

'Mid savage rocks, and seas of snow that shine,
Between interminable tracts of pine,
Within a temple stands an awful shrine,
By an uncertain light revealed, that falls
On the mute Image and the troubled walls.
Oh ! give not me that eye of hard disdain
That views, undimmed, Einsiedlen's † wretched
fane.

While ghastly faces through the gloom appear,
Abortive joy, and hope that works in fear ;
While prayer contends with silenced agony,
Surely in other thoughts contempt may die.
If the sad grave of human ignorance bear
One flower of hope—oh, pass and leave it there !

The tall sun, pausing on an Alpine spire,
Flings o'er the wilderness a stream of fire :
Now meet we other pilgrims ere the day
Close on the remnant of their weary way ;

* The well-known effect of the famous air, called in French *Ranz des Vaches*, upon the Swiss troops.

† This shrine is resorted to, from a hope of relief, by multitudes, from every corner of the Catholic world, labouring under mental or bodily afflictions.

While they are drawing toward the sacred floor
Where, so they fondly think, the worm shall gnaw
no more.

How gaily murmur and how sweetly taste
The fountains * reared for them amid the waste !
Their thirst they slake :—they wash their toil-
worn feet,

And some with tears of joy each other greet.
Yes, I must see you when ye first behold
Those holy turrets tipped with evening gold,
In that glad moment will for you a sigh
Be heaved, of charitable sympathy ;
In that glad moment when your hands are prest
In mute devotion on the thankful breast !

Last, let us turn to Chamouny that shields
With rocks and gloomy woods her fertile fields :
Five streams of ice amid her cots descend,
And with wild flowers and blooming orchards
blend ;—

A scene more fair than what the Grecian feigns
Of purple lights and ever-vernal plains ;
Here all the seasons revel hand in hand :
'Mid lawns and shades by breezy rivulets fanned,
They sport beneath that mountain's matchless
height

That holds no commerce with the summer night.
From age to age, throughout his lonely bounds
The crash of ruin fitfully resounds ;
Appalling havoc ! but serene his brow,
Where daylight lingers on perpetual snow ;
Glitter the stars above, and all is black below.

What marvel then if many a Wanderer sigh,
While roars the sullen Arve in anger by,
That not for thy reward, unrivalled Vale !
Waves the ripe harvest in the autumnal gale ;
That thou, the slave of slaves, art doomed to pine
And droop, while no Italian arts are thine,
To soothe or cheer, to soften or refine.

Hail Freedom ! whether it was mine to stray,
With shrill winds whistling round my lonely way,
On the bleak sides of Cumbria's heath-clad moors,
Or where dank sea-weed lashes Scotland's shores ;
To scent the sweets of Piedmont's breathing rose,
And orange gale that o'er Lugano blows ;
Still have I found, where Tyranny prevails,
That virtue languishes and pleasure fails,
While the remotest hamlets blessings share
In thy loved presence known, and only there ;

* Rude fountains built and covered with sheds for the accommodation of the Pilgrims, in their ascent of the mountain.

Heart-blessings—outward treasures too which the eye

Of the sun peeping through the clouds can spy,
And every passing breeze will testify.
There, to the porch, belike with jasmine bound
Or woodbine wreaths, a smoother path is wound ;
The housewife there a brighter garden sees,
Where hum on busier wing her happy bees ;
On infant cheeks there fresher roses blow ;
And grey-haired men look up with livelier brow,—
To greet the traveller needing food and rest ;
Housed for the night, or but a half-hour's guest.

And oh, fair France! though now the traveller sees
Thy three-striped banner fluctuate on the breeze ;
Though martial songs have banished songs of love,
And nightingales desert the village grove,
Scared by the fife and rumbling drum's alarms,
And the short thunder, and the flash of arms ;
That cease not till night falls, when far and nigh,
Sole sound, the Sourd * prolongs his mournful cry !
—Yet, hast thou found that Freedom spreads her power

Beyond the cottage-hearth, the cottage-door :
All nature smiles, and owns beneath her eyes
Her fields peculiar, and peculiar skies.
Yes, as I roamed where Loiret's waters glide
Through rustling aspens heard from side to side,
When from October clouds a milder light
Fell where the blue flood rippled into white ;
Methought from every cot the watchful bird
Crowded with ear-piercing power till then unheard ;
Each clacking mill, that broke the murmuring streams,
Rocked the charmed thought in more delightful dreams ;

Chasing those pleasant dreams, the falling leaf
Awoke a fainter sense of moral grief ;
The measured echo of the distant flail
Wound in more welcome cadence down the vale ;
With more majestic course † the water rolled,
And ripening foliage shone with richer gold.
—But foes are gathering—Liberty must raise
Red on the hills her beacon's far-seen blaze ;
Must bid the tocsin ring from tower to tower !—
Nearer and nearer comes the trying hour !
Rejoice, brave Land, though pride's perverted ire

* An insect so called, which emits a short, melancholy cry, heard at the close of the summer evenings, on the banks of the Loire.

† The duties upon many parts of the French rivers were so exorbitant, that the poorer people, deprived of the benefit of water carriage, were obliged to transport their goods by land.

Rouse hell's own aid, and wrap thy fields in fire :
Lo, from the flames a great and glorious birth ;
As if a new-made heaven were hailing a new earth !
—All cannot be : the promise is too fair
For creatures doomed to breathe terrestrial air :
Yet not for this will sober reason frown
Upon that promise, nor the hope disown ;
She knows that only from high aims ensue
Rich guerdons, and to them alone are due.

Great God ! by whom the strifes of men are weighed
In an impartial balance, give thine aid
To the just cause ; and, oh ! do thou preside
Over the mighty stream now spreading wide :
So shall its waters, from the heavens supplied
In copious showers, from earth by wholesome springs,
Brood o'er the long-parched lands with Nile-like wings !
And grant that every sceptred child of clay
Who cries presumptuous, " Here the flood shall stay,"
May in its progress see thy guiding hand,
And cease the acknowledged purpose to withstand ;
Or, swept in anger from the insulted shore,
Sink with his servile bands, to rise no more !

To-night, my Friend, within this humble cot
Be scorn and fear and hope alike forgot
In timely sleep ; and when, at break of day,
On the tall peaks the glistening sunbeams play,
With a light heart our course we may renew,
The first whose footsteps print the mountain dew.

1791 & 1792.

VII.

LINES

Left upon a Seat in a Yew-tree, which stands near the lake of Esthwaite, on a desolate part of the shore, commanding a beautiful prospect.

NAY, Traveller ! rest. This lonely Yew-tree stands
Far from all human dwelling : what if here
No sparkling rivulet spread the verdant herb ?
What if the bee love not these barren boughs ?
Yet, if the wind breathe soft, the curling waves,
That break against the shore, shall lull thy mind
By one soft impulse saved from vacancy.

—Who he was
That piled these stones and with the mossy sod
First covered, and here taught this aged Tree
With its dark arms to form a circling bower,
I well remember.—He was one who owned

No common soul. In youth by science nursed,
 And led by nature into a wild scene
 Of lofty hopes, he to the world went forth
 A favoured Being, knowing no desire
 Which genius did not hallow ; 'gainst the taint
 Of dissolute tongues, and jealousy, and hate,
 And scorn,—against all enemies prepared,
 All but neglect. The world, for so it thought,
 Owed him no service ; wherefore he at once
 With indignation turned himself away,
 And with the food of pride sustained his soul
 In solitude.—Stranger ! these gloomy boughs
 Had charms for him ; and here he loved to sit,
 His only visitants a straggling sheep,
 The stone-chat, or the glancing sand-piper :
 And on these barren rocks, with fern and heath,
 And juniper and thistle, sprinkled o'er,
 Fixing his downcast eye, he many an hour
 A morbid pleasure nourished, tracing here
 An emblem of his own unfruitful life :
 And, lifting up his head, he then would gaze
 On the more distant scene,—how lovely 'tis
 Thou seest,—and he would gaze till it became
 Far lovelier, and his heart could not sustain
 The beauty, still moreauteous ! Nor, that time,
 When nature had subdued him to herself,
 Would he forget those Beings to whose minds
 Warm from the labours of benevolence
 The world, and human life, appeared a scene
 Of kindred loveliness : then he would sigh,
 Inly disturbed, to think that others felt
 What he must never feel : and so, lost Man !
 On visionary views would fancy feed,
 Till his eye streamed with tears. In this deep vale
 He died,—this seat his only monument.

If Thou be one whose heart the holy forms
 Of young imagination have kept pure,
 Stranger ! henceforth be warned ; and know that
 pride,
 Howe'er disguised in its own majesty,
 Is littleness ; that he who feels contempt
 For any living thing, hath faculties
 Which he has never used ; that thought with him
 Is in its infancy. The man whose eye
 Is ever on himself doth look on one,
 The least of Nature's works, one who might move
 The wise man to that scorn which wisdom holds
 Unlawful, ever. O be wiser, Thou !
 Instructed that true knowledge leads to love ;
 True dignity abides with him alone
 Who, in the silent hour of inward thought,
 Can still suspect, and still revere himself,
 In lowliness of heart.

1795.

VIII.

GUILT AND SORROW ;

OR,

INCIDENTS UPON SALISBURY PLAIN.

ADVERTISEMENT,

PREFIXED TO THE FIRST EDITION OF THIS POEM, PUBLISHED
 IN 1842.

Nor less than one-third of the following poem, though it has from time to time been altered in the expression, was published so far back as the year 1798, under the title of "The Female Vagrant." The extract is of such length that an apology seems to be required for reprinting it here : but it was necessary to restore it to its original position, or the rest would have been unintelligible. The whole was written before the close of the year 1794, and I will detail, rather as matter of literary biography than for any other reason, the circumstances under which it was produced.

During the latter part of the summer of 1793, having passed a month in the Isle of Wight, in view of the fleet which was then preparing for sea off Portsmouth at the commencement of the war, I left the place with melancholy forebodings. The American war was still fresh in memory. The struggle which was beginning, and which many thought would be brought to a speedy close by the irresistible arms of Great Britain being added to those of the allies, I was assured in my own mind would be of long continuance, and productive of distress and misery beyond all possible calculation. This conviction was pressed upon me by having been a witness, during a long residence in revolutionary France, of the spirit which prevailed in that country. After leaving the Isle of Wight, I spent two days in wandering on foot over Salisbury Plain, which, though cultivation was then widely spread through parts of it, had upon the whole a still more impressive appearance than it now retains.

The monuments and traces of antiquity, scattered in abundance over that region, led me unavoidably to compare what we know or guess of those remote times with certain aspects of modern society, and with calamities, principally those consequent upon war, to which, more than other classes of men, the poor are subject. In those reflections, joined with particular facts that had come to my knowledge, the following stanzas originated.

In conclusion, to obviate some distraction in the minds of those who are well acquainted with Salisbury Plain, it may be proper to say, that of the features described as belonging to it, one or two are taken from other desolate parts of England.

I.

A TRAVELLER on the skirt of Sarum's Plain
 Pursued his vagrant way, with feet half bare ;
 Stooping his gait, but not as if to gain
 Help from the staff he bore ; for mien and air
 Were hardy, though his cheek seemed worn with
 care
 Both of the time to come, and time long fled :

Down fell in straggling locks his thin grey hair ;
A coat he wore of military red
But faded, and stuck o'er with many a patch and
shred.

II.

While thus he journeyed, step by step led on,
He saw and passed a stately inn, full sure
That welcome in such house for him was none.
No board inscribed the needy to allure
Hung there, no bush proclaimed to old and poor
And desolate, "Here you will find a friend!"
The pendent grapes glittered above the door;—
On he must pace, perchance 'till night descend,
Where'er the dreary roads their bare white lines
extend.

III.

The gathering clouds grew red with stormy fire,
In streaks diverging wide and mounting high;
That inn he long had passed; the distant spire,
Which oft as he looked back had fixed his eye,
Was lost, though still he looked, in the blank sky.
Perplexed and comfortless he gazed around,
And scarce could any trace of man descry,
Save cornfields stretched and stretching without
bound;
But where the sower dwelt was nowhere to be
found.

IV.

No tree was there, no meadow's pleasant green,
No brook to wet his lip or soothe his ear;
Long files of corn-stacks here and there were seen,
But not one dwelling-place his heart to cheer.
Some labourer, thought he, may perchance be near;
And so he sent a feeble shout—in vain;
No voice made answer, he could only hear
Winds rustling over plots of unripe grain,
Or whistling thro' thin grass along the unfurrowed
plain.

V.

Long had he fancied each successive slope
Concealed some cottage, whither he might turn
And rest; but now along heaven's darkening cope
The crows rushed by in eddies, homeward borne.
Thus warned he sought some shepherd's spreading
thorn
Or hovel from the storm to shield his head,
But sought in vain; for now, all wild, forlorn,
And vacant, a huge waste around him spread;
The wet cold ground, he feared, must be his only
bed.

VI.

And be it so—for to the chill night shower
And the sharp wind his head he oft hath bared;

A Sailor he, who many a wretched hour
Hath told; for, landing after labour hard,
Full long endured in hope of just reward,
He to an armèd fleet was forced away
By seamen, who perhaps themselves had shared
Like fate; was hurried off, a helpless prey,
'Gainst all that in *his* heart, or theirs perhaps, said
nay.

VII.

For years the work of carnage did not cease,
And death's dire aspect daily he surveyed,
Death's minister; then came his glad release,
And hope returned, and pleasure fondly made
Her dwelling in his dreams. By Fancy's aid
The happy husband flies, his arms to throw
Round his wife's neck; the prize of victory laid
In her full lap, he sees such sweet tears flow
As if thenceforth nor pain nor trouble she could
know.

VIII.

Vain hope! for fraud took all that he had earned.
The lion roars and gluts his tawny brood
Even in the desert's heart; but he, returned,
Bears not to those he loves their needful food.
His home approaching, but in such a mood
That from his sight his children might have run,
He met a traveller, robbed him, shed his blood;
And when the miserable work was done
He fled, a vagrant since, the murderer's fate to
shun.

IX.

From that day forth no place to him could be
So lonely, but that thence might come a pang
Brought from without to inward misery.
Now, as he plodded on, with sullen clang
A sound of chains along the desert rang;
He looked, and saw upon a gibbet high
A human body that in irons swang,
Uplifted by the tempest whirling by;
And, hovering, round it often did a raven fly.

X.

It was a spectacle which none might view,
In spot so savage, but with shuddering pain;
Nor only did for him at once renew
All he had feared from man, but roused a train
Of the mind's phantoms, horrible as vain.
The stones, as if to cover him from day,
Rolled at his back along the living plain;
He fell, and without sense or motion lay;
But, when the trance was gone, feebly pursued his
way.

XI.

As one whose brain habitual phrensy fires
Owes to the fit in which his soul hath tossed
Profounder quiet, when the fit retires,
Even so the dire phantasma which had crossed
His sense, in sudden vacancy quite lost,
Left his mind still as a deep evening stream.
Nor, if accosted now, in thought engrossed,
Moody, or inly troubled, would he seem
To traveller who might talk of any casual theme.

XII.

Hurtle the clouds in deeper darkness piled,
Gone is the raven timely rest to seek ;
He seemed the only creature in the wild
On whom the elements their rage might wreak ;
Save that the bustard, of those regions bleak
Shy tenant, seeing by the uncertain light
A man there wandering, gave a mournful shriek,
And half upon the ground, with strange affright,
Forced hard against the wind a thick unwieldy
flight.

XIII.

All, all was cheerless to the horizon's bound ;
The weary eye—which, wheresoe'er it strays,
Marks nothing but the red sun's setting round,
Or on the earth strange lines, in former days
Left by gigantic arms—at length surveys
What seems an antique castle spreading wide ;
Hoary and naked are its walls, and raise
Their brow sublime : in shelter there to bide
He turned, while rain poured down smoking on
every side.

XIV.

File of Stone-henge ! so proud to hint yet keep
Thy secrets, thou that lov'st to stand and hear
The Plain resounding to the whirlwind's sweep,
Inmate of lonesome Nature's endless year ;
Even if thou saw'st the giant wicker rear
For sacrifice its throngs of living men,
Before thy face did ever wretch appear,
Who in his heart had groaned with deadlier pain
Than he who, tempest-driven, thy shelter now
would gain.

XV.

Within that fabric of mysterious form,
Winds met in conflict, each by turns supreme ;
And, from the perilous ground dislodged, through
storm
And rain he wildered on, no moon to stream
From gulf of parting clouds one friendly beam,
Nor any friendly sound his footsteps led ;
Once did the lightning's faint disastrous gleam

Disclose a naked guide-post's double head,
Sight which tho' lost at once a gleam of pleasure
shed.

XVI.

No swinging sign-board creaked from cottage elm
To stay his steps with faintness overcome ;
'Twas dark and void as ocean's watery realm
Roaring with storms beneath night's starless gloom ;
No gipsy cower'd o'er fire of furze or broom ;
No labourer watched his red kiln glaring bright,
Nor taper glimmered dim from sick man's room ;
Along the waste no line of mournful light
From lamp of lonely toll-gate streamed athwart
the night.

XVII.

At length, though hid in clouds, the moon arose ;
The downs were visible—and now revealed
A structure stands, which two bare slopes enclose.
It was a spot, where, ancient vows fulfilled,
Kind pious hands did to the Virgin build
A lonely Spital, the belated swain
From the night terrors of that waste to shield :
But there no human being could remain,
And now the walls are named the "Dead House"
of the plain.

XVIII.

Though he had little cause to love the abode
Of man, or covet sight of mortal face,
Yet when faint beams of light that ruin showed,
How glad he was at length to find some trace
Of human shelter in that dreary place.
Till to his flock the early shepherd goes,
Here shall much-needed sleep his frame embrace.
In a dry nook where fern the floor bestrows
He lays his stiffened limbs,—his eyes begin to close ;

XIX.

When hearing a deep sigh, that seemed to come
From one who mourned in sleep, he raised his
head,
And saw a woman in the naked room
Outstretched, and turning on a restless bed :
The moon a wan dead light around her shed.
He waked her—spake in tone that would not fail,
He hoped, to calm her mind ; but ill he sped,
For of that ruin she had heard a tale
Which now with freezing thoughts did all her
powers assail ;

XX.

Had heard of one who, forced from storms to
shroud,
Felt the loose walls of this decayed Retreat

Rock to incessant neighings shrill and loud,
While his horse pawed the floor with furious heat ;
Till on a stone, that sparkled to his feet,
Struck, and still struck again, the troubled horse :
The man half raised the stone with pain and sweat,
Half raised, for well his arm might lose its force
Disclosing the grim head of a late murdered corse.

XXI.

Such tale of this lone mansion she had learned
And, when that shape, with eyes in sleep half
drowned,

By the moon's sullen lamp she first discerned,
Cold stony horror all her senses bound.
Her he addressed in words of cheering sound ;
Recovering heart, like answer did she make ;
And well it was that, of the corse there found,
In converse that ensued she nothing spake ;
She knew not what dire pangs in him such tale
could wake.

XXII.

But soon his voice and words of kind intent
Banished that dismal thought ; and now the wind
In fainter howlings told its *rage* was spent :
Meanwhile discourse ensued of various kind,
Which by degrees a confidence of mind
And mutual interest failed not to create.
And, to a natural sympathy resigned,
In that forsaken building where they sate
The Woman thus retraced her own untoward fate.

XXIII.

"By Derwent's side my father dwelt—a man
Of virtuous life, by pious parents bred ;
And I believe that, soon as I began
To lisp, he made me kneel beside my bed,
And in his hearing there my prayers I said :
And afterwards, by my good father taught,
I read, and loved the books in which I read ;
For books in every neighbouring house I sought,
And nothing to my mind a sweeter pleasure brought.

XXIV.

A little croft we owned—a plot of corn,
A garden stored with peas, and mint, and thyme,
And flowers for posies, oft on Sunday morn
Plucked while the church bells rang their earliest
chime.

Can I forget our freaks at shearing time !
My hen's rich nest through long grass scarce espied ;
The cowslip-gathering in June's dewy prime ;
The swans that with white chests upreared in pride
Rushing and racing came to meet me at the water-
side !

XXV.

The staff I well remember which upbore
The bending body of my active sire ;
His seat beneath the honied sycamore
Where the bees hummed, and chair by winter fire ;
When market-morning came, the neat attire
With which, though bent on haste, myself I decked ;
Our watchful house-dog, that would tease and tire
The stranger till its barking-fit I checked ;
The red-breast, known for years, which at my
casement pecked.

XXVI.

The suns of twenty summers danced along,—
Too little marked how fast they rolled away :
But, through severe mischance and cruel wrong,
My father's substance fell into decay :
We toiled and struggled, hoping for a day
When Fortune might put on a kinder look ;
But vain were wishes, efforts vain as they ;
He from his old hereditary nook
Must part ; the summons came ;—our final leave
we took.

XXVII.

It was indeed a miserable hour
When, from the last hill-top, my sire surveyed,
Peering above the trees, the steeple tower
That on his marriage day sweet music made !
Till then, he hoped his bones might there be laid
Close by my mother in their native bowers :
Bidding me trust in God, he stood and prayed ;—
I could not pray :—through tears that fell in
showers
Glimmered our dear-loved home, alas ! no longer
ours !

XXVIII.

There was a Youth whom I had loved so long,
That when I loved him not I cannot say :
'Mid the green mountains many a thoughtless song
We two had sung, like gladsome birds in May ;
When we began to tire of childish play,
We seemed still more and more to prize each other ;
We talked of marriage and our marriage day ;
And I in truth did love him like a brother,
For never could I hope to meet with such another.

XXIX.

Two years were passed since to a distant town
He had repaired to ply a gainful trade ;
What tears of bitter grief, till then unknown !
What tender vows our last sad kiss delayed !
To him we turned :—we had no other aid :
Like one revived, upon his neck I wept ;

And her whom he had loved in joy, he said,
He well could love in grief ; his faith he kept ;
And in a quiet home once more my father slept.

xxx.

We lived in peace and comfort ; and were blest
With daily bread, by constant toil supplied.
Three lovely babes had lain upon my breast :
And often, viewing their sweet smiles, I sighed,
And knew not why. My happy father died,
When threatened war reduced the children's meal :
Thrice happy ! that for him the grave could hide
The empty loom, cold hearth, and silent wheel,
And tears that flowed for ills which patience might
not heal.

xxxii.

'Twas a hard change ; an evil time was come ;
We had no hope, and no relief could gain :
But soon, with proud parade, the noisy drum
Beat round to clear the streets of want and pain.
My husband's arms now only served to strain
Me and his children hungering in his view ;
In such dismay my prayers and tears were vain :
To join those miserable men he flew,
And now to the sea-coast, with numbers more, we
drew.

xxxiii.

There were we long neglected, and we bore
Much sorrow ere the fleet its anchor weighed ;
Green fields before us, and our native shore,
We breathed a pestilential air, that made
Ravage for which no knell was heard. We prayed
For our departure ; wished and wished—nor knew,
'Mid that long sickness and those hopes delayed,
That happier days we never more must view.
The parting signal streamed—at last the land with-
drew.

xxxiii.

But the calm summer season now was past.
On as we drove, the equinoctial deep
Ran mountains high before the howling blast,
And many perished in the whirlwind's sweep.
We gazed with terror on their gloomy sleep,
Untaught that soon such anguish must ensue,
Our hopes such harvest of affliction reap,
That we the mercy of the waves should rue :
We reached the western world, a poor devoted
crew.

xxxiv.

The pains and plagues that on our heads came
down,
Disease and famine, agony and fear,

In wood or wilderness, in camp or town,
It would unman the firmest heart to hear.
All perished—all in one remorseless year,
Husband and children ! one by one, by sword
And ravenous plague, all perished : every tear
Dried up, despairing, desolate, on board
A British ship I waked, as from a trance restored."

xxxv.

Here paused she of all present thought forlorn,
Nor voice, nor sound, that moment's pain expressed,
Yet Nature, with excess of grief o'erborne,
From her full eyes their watery load released.
He too was mute ; and, ere her weeping ceased,
He rose, and to the ruin's portal went,
And saw the dawn opening the silvery east
With rays of promise, north and southward sent ;
And soon with crimson fire kindled the firmament.

xxxvi.

" O come," he cried, " come, after weary night
Of such rough storm, this happy change to view."
So forth she came, and eastward looked ; the sight
Over her brow like dawn of gladness threw ;
Upon her cheek, to which its youthful hue
Seemed to return, dried the last lingering tear,
And from her grateful heart a fresh one drew :
The whilst her comrade to her pensive cheer
Tempered fit words of hope ; and the lark warbled
near.

xxxvii.

They looked and saw a lengthening road, and wain
That rang down a bare slope not far remote :
The barrows glistened bright with drops of rain,
Whistled the waggoner with merry note,
The cock far off sounded his clarion throat ;
But town, or farm, or hamlet, none they viewed,
Only were told there stood a lonely cot
A long mile thence. While thither they pursued
Their way, the Woman thus her mournful tale
renewed.

xxxviii.

" Peaceful as this immeasurable plain
Is now, by beams of dawning light imprest,
In the calm sunshine slept the glittering main ;
The very ocean hath its hour of rest.
I too forgot the heavings of my breast.
How quiet 'round me ship and ocean were !
As quiet all within me. I was blest,
And looked, and fed upon the silent air
Until it seemed to bring a joy to my despair.

XXXIX.

Ah ! how unlike those late terrific sleeps,
 And groans that rage of racking famine spoke ;
 The unburied dead that lay in festering heaps,
 The breathing pestilence that rose like smoke,
 The shriek that from the distant battle broke,
 The mine's dire earthquake, and the pallid host
 Driven by the bomb's incessant thunder-stroke
 To loathsome vaults, where heart-sick anguish
 tossed,
 Hope died, and fear itself in agony was lost !

XL.

Some mighty gulf of separation past,
 I seemed transported to another world ;
 A thought resigned with pain, when from the
 mast
 The impatient mariner the sail unfurled,
 And, whistling, called the wind that hardly curled
 The silent sea. From the sweet thoughts of home
 And from all hope I was for ever hurled.
 For me—farthest from earthly port to roam
 Was best, could I but shun the spot where man
 might come.

XLI.

And oft I thought (my fancy was so strong)
 That I, at last, a resting-place had found ;
 'Here will I dwell,' said I, 'my whole life long,
 Roaming the illimitable waters round ;
 Here will I live, of all but heaven disowned,
 And end my days upon the peaceful flood.'—
 To break my dream the vessel reached its bound ;
 And homeless near a thousand homes I stood,
 And near a thousand tables pined and wanted
 food.

XLII.

No help I sought; in sorrow turned adrift,
 Was hopeless, as if cast on some bare rock ;
 Nor morsel to my mouth that day did lift,
 Nor raised my hand at any door to knock.
 I lay where, with his drowsy mates, the cock
 From the cross-timber of an out-house hung :
 Dismally tolled, that night, the city clock !
 At morn my sick heart hunger scarcely stung,
 Nor to the beggar's language could I fit my
 tongue.

XLIII.

So passed a second day ; and, when the third
 Was come, I tried in vain the crowd's resort.
 —In deep despair, by frightful wishes stirred,
 Near the sea-side I reached a ruined fort ;
 There, pains which nature could no more support,

With blindness linked, did on my vitals fail ;
 And, after many interruptions short
 Of hideous sense, I sank, nor step could crawl :
 Unsought for was the help that did my life recal.

XLIV.

Borne to a hospital, I lay with brain
 Drowsy and weak, and shattered memory ;
 I heard my neighbours in their beds complain
 Of many things which never troubled me—
 Of feet still bustling round with busy glee,
 Of looks where common kindness had no part,
 Of service done with cold formality,
 Fretting the fever round the languid heart,
 And groans which, as they said, might make a dead
 man start.

XLV.

These things just served to stir the slumbering
 sense,
 Nor pain nor pity in my bosom raised.
 With strength did memory return ; and, thence
 Dismissed, again on open day I gazed,
 At houses, men, and common light, amazed.
 The lanes I sought, and, as the sun retired,
 Came where beneath the trees a faggot blazed ;
 The travellers saw me weep, my fate inquired,
 And gave me food—and rest, more welcome, more
 desired.

XLVI.

Rough potters seemed they, trading soberly
 With panniered asses driven from door to door ;
 But life of happier sort set forth to me,
 And other joys my fancy to allure—
 The bag-pipe dinning on the midnight moor
 In barn uplighted ; and companions boon,
 Well met from far with revelry secure
 Among the forest glades, while jocund June
 Rolled fast along the sky his warm and genial
 moon.

XLVII.

But ill they suited me—those journeys dark
 O'er moor and mountain, midnight theft to hatch !
 To charm the surly house-dog's faithful bark,
 Or hang on tip-toe at the lifted latch.
 The gloomy lantern, and the dim blue match,
 The black disguise, the warning whistle shrill,
 And ear still busy on its nightly watch,
 Were not for me, brought up in nothing ill :
 Besides, on griefs so fresh my thoughts were brood-
 ing still.

XLVIII.

What could I do, unaided and unblest ?
 My father ! gone was every friend of thine :

And kindred of dead husband are at best
 Small help ; and, after marriage such as mine,
 With little kindness would to me incline.
 Nor was I then for toil or service fit ;
 My deep-drawn sighs no effort could confine ;
 In open air forgetful would I sit
 Whole hours, with idle arms in moping sorrow
 knit.

XLIX.

The roads I paced, I loitered through the fields ;
 Contentedly, yet sometimes self-accused,
 Trusted my life to what chance bounty yields,
 Now coldly given, now utterly refused.
 The ground I for my bed have often used ;
 But what afflicts my peace with keenest ruth,
 Is that I have my inner self abused,
 Foregone the home delight of constant truth,
 And clear and open soul, so prized in fearless
 youth.

L.

Through tears the rising sun I oft have viewed,
 Through tears have seen him towards that world
 descend

Where my poor heart lost all its fortitude :
 Three years a wanderer now my course I bend—
 Oh ! tell me whither—for no earthly friend
 Have I.”—She ceased, and weeping turned away ;
 As if because her tale was at an end,
 She wept ; because she had no more to say
 Of that perpetual weight which on her spirit lay.

LI.

True sympathy the Sailor’s looks expressed,
 His looks—for pondering he was mute the while.
 Of social Order’s care for wretchedness,
 Of Time’s sure help to calm and reconcile,
 Joy’s second spring and Hope’s long-treasured
 smile,

’Twas not for *him* to speak—a man so tried.
 Yet, to relieve her heart, in friendly style
 Proverbial words of comfort he applied,
 And not in vain, while they went pacing side by
 side.

LII.

Ere long, from heaps of turf, before their sight,
 Together smoking in the sun’s slant beam,
 Rise various wreaths that into one unite
 Which high and higher mounts with silver gleam :
 Fair spectacle,—but instantly a scream
 Thence bursting shrill did all remark prevent ;
 They paused, and heard a hoarser voice blaspheme,
 And female cries. Their course they thither bent,
 And met a man who foamed with anger vehement.

LIII.

A woman stood with quivering lips and pale,
 And, pointing to a little child that lay
 Stretched on the ground, began a piteous tale ;
 How in a simple freak of thoughtless play
 He had provoked his father, who straightway,
 As if each blow were deadlier than the last,
 Struck the poor innocent. Pallid with dismay
 The Soldier’s Widow heard and stood aghast ;
 And stern looks on the man her grey-haired Com-
 rade cast.

LIV.

His voice with indignation rising high
 Such further deed in manhood’s name forbade ;
 The peasant, wild in passion, made reply
 With bitter insult and revilings sad ;
 Asked him in scorn what business there he had ;
 What kind of plunder he was hunting now ;
 The gallows would one day of him be glad ;—
 Though inward anguish damped the Sailor’s brow,
 Yet calm he seemed as thoughts so poignant would
 allow.

LV.

Softly he stroked the child, who lay outstretched
 With face to earth ; and, as the boy turned round
 His battered head, a groan the Sailor fetched
 As if he saw—there and upon that ground—
 Strange repetition of the deadly wound
 He had himself inflicted. Through his brain
 At once the griding iron passage found ;
 Deluge of tender thoughts then rushed amain,
 Nor could his sunken eyes the starting tear restrain.

LVI.

Within himself he said—What hearts have we !
 The blessing this a father gives his child !
 Yet happy thou, poor boy ! compared with me,
 Suffering not doing ill—fate far more mild.
 The stranger’s looks and tears of wrath beguiled
 The father, and relenting thoughts awoke ;
 He kissed his son—so all was reconciled.
 Then, with a voice which inward trouble broke
 Ere to his lips it came, the Sailor them bespoke.

LVII.

“ Bad is the world, and hard is the world’s law
 Even for the man who wears the warmest fleece ;
 Much need have ye that time more closely draw
 The bond of nature, all unkindness cease,
 And that among so few there still be peace :
 Else can ye hope but with such numerous foes
 Your pains shall ever with your years increase ?”—

While from his heart the appropriate lesson flows,
A correspondent calm stole gently o'er his woes.

LVIII.

Forthwith the pair passed on ; and down they look
Into a narrow valley's pleasant scene
Where wreaths of vapour tracked a winding brook,
That babbled on through groves and meadows
green ;

A low-roofed house peeped out the trees between ;
The dripping groves resound with cheerful lays,
And melancholy lowings intervene
Of scattered herds, that in the meadow graze,
Some amid lingering shade, some touched by the
sun's rays.

LIX.

They saw and heard, and, winding with the road
Down a thick wood, they dropt into the vale ;
Comfort by prouder mansions unbested
Their wearied frames, she hoped, would soon
regale.

Erelong they reached that cottage in the dale :
It was a rustic inn ;—the board was spread,
The milk-maid followed with her brimming pail,
And lustily the master carved the bread,
Kindly the housewife pressed, and they in comfort
fed.

LX.

Their breakfast done, the pair, though loth, must
part ;

Wanderers whose course no longer now agrees.
She rose and bade farewell ! and, while her heart
Struggled with tears nor could its sorrow ease,
She left him there ; for, clustering round his knees,
With his oak-staff the cottage children played ;
And soon she reached a spot o'erhung with trees
And banks of ragged earth ; beneath the shade
Across the pebbly road a little runnel strayed.

LXI.

A cart and horse beside the rivulet stood ;
Chequering the canvas roof the sunbeams shone.
She saw the carman bend to scoop the flood
As the wain fronted her,—wherein lay one,
A pale-faced Woman, in disease far gone.
The carman wet her lips as well behaved ;
Bed under her lean body there was none,
Though even to die near one she most had loved
She could not of herself those wasted limbs have
moved.

LXII.

The Soldier's Widow learned with honest pain
And homefelt force of sympathy sincere,

Why thus that worn-out wretch must there sustain
The jolting road and morning air severe.
The wain pursued its way ; and following near
In pure compassion she her steps retraced
Far as the cottage. " A sad sight is here,"
She cried aloud ; and forth ran out in haste
The friends whom she had left but a few minutes
past.

LXIII.

While to the door with eager speed they ran,
From her bare straw the Woman half upraised
Her bony visage—gaunt and deadly wan ;
No pity asking, on the group she gazed
With a dim eye, distracted and amazed ;
Then sank upon her straw with feeble moan.
Fervently cried the housewife—" God be praised,
I have a house that I can call my own ;
Nor shall she perish there, untended and alone !"

LXIV.

So in they bear her to the chimney seat,
And busily, though yet with fear, untie
Her garments, and, to warm her icy feet
And chafe her temples, careful hands apply.
Nature reviving, with a deep-drawn sigh
She strove, and not in vain, her head to rear ;
Then said—" I thank you all ; if I must die,
The God in heaven my prayers for you will hear ;
Till now I did not think my end had been so near.

LXV.

" Barred every comfort labour could procure,
Suffering what no endurance could assuage,
I was compelled to seek my father's door,
Though loth to be a burthen on his age.
But sickness stopped me in an early stage
Of my sad journey ; and within the wain
They placed me—there to end life's pilgrimage,
Unless beneath your roof I may remain :
For I shall never see my father's door again.

LXVI.

" My life, Heaven knows, hath long been burthen-
some ;
But, if I have not meekly suffered, meek
May my end be ! Soon will this voice be dumb :
Should child of mine e'er wander hither, speak
Of me, say that the worm is on my cheek.—
Torn from our hut, that stood beside the sea
Near Portland lighthouse in a lonesome creek,
My husband served in sad captivity
On shipboard, bound till peace or death should set
him free.

LXVII.

"A sailor's wife I knew a widow's cares,
Yet two sweet little ones partook my bed ;
Hope cheered my dreams, and to my daily prayers
Our heavenly Father granted each day's bread ;
Till one was found by stroke of violence dead,
Whose body near our cottage chanced to lie ;
A dire suspicion drove us from our shed ;
In vain to find a friendly face we try,
Nor could we live together those poor boys and I ;

LXVIII.

"For evil tongues made oath how on that day
My husband lurked about the neighbourhood ;
Now he had fled, and whither none could say,
And *he* had done the deed in the dark wood—
Near his own home !—but he was mild and good ;
Never on earth was gentler creature seen ;
He'd not have robbed the raven of its food.
My husband's loving kindness stood between
Me and all worldly harms and wrongs however
keen."

LXIX.

Alas ! the thing she told with labouring breath
The Sailor knew too well. That wickedness
His hand had wrought ; and when, in the hour of
death,
He saw his Wife's lips move his name to bless
With her last words, unable to suppress
His anguish, with his heart he ceased to strive ;
And, weeping loud in this extreme distress,
He cried—"Do pity me ! That thou shouldst live
I neither ask nor wish—forgive me, but forgive !"

LXX.

To tell the change that Voice within her wrought
Nature by sign or sound made no essay ;
A sudden joy surprised expiring thought,
And every mortal pang dissolved away.
Borne gently to a bed, in death she lay ;
Yet still while over her the husband bent,
A look was in her face which seemed to say,
"Be blest ; by sight of thee from heaven was sent
Peace to my parting soul, the fulness of content."

LXXI.

She slept in peace,—his pulses throbbed and stopped,
Breathless he gazed upon her face,—then took
Her hand in his, and raised it, but both dropped,
When on his own he cast a rueful look.
His ears were never silent ; sleep forsook
His burning eyelids stretched and stiff as lead ;
All night from time to time under him shook
The floor as he lay shuddering on his bed ;
And oft he groaned aloud, "O God, that I were
dead !"

LXXII.

The Soldier's Widow lingered in the cot ;
And, when he rose, he thanked her pious care
Through which his Wife, to that kind shelter
brought,
Died in his arms ; and with those thanks a prayer
He breathed for her, and for that merciful pair.
The corse interred, not one hour he remained
Beneath their roof, but to the open air
A burthen, now with fortitude sustained,
He bore within a breast where dreadful quiet
reigned.

LXXIII.

Confirmed of purpose, fearlessly prepared
For act and suffering, to the city straight
He journeyed, and forthwith his crime declared :
"And from your doom," he added, "now I wait,
Nor let it linger long, the murderer's fate."
Not ineffectual was that piteous claim :
"O welcome sentence which will end though late,"
He said, "the pangs that to my conscience came
Out of that deed. My trust, Saviour ! is in thy
name !"

LXXIV.

His fate was pitied. Him in iron case
(Reader, forgive the intolerable thought)
They hung not :—no one on *his* form or face
Could gaze, as on a show by idlers sought ;
No kindred sufferer, to his death-place brought
By lawless curiosity or chance,
When into storm the evening sky is wrought,
Upon his swinging corse an eye can glance,
And drop, as he once dropped, in miserable trance.

THE BORDERERS.

A Tragedy.

(COMPOSED 1795-6.)

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MARMADUKE. }
 OSWALD. } Of the Band of Borderers.
 WALLACE. }
 LACY. }
 LENNOX. }
 HERBERT. }
 WILFRED, Servant to MARMADUKE.
 Host.

Forester.
 ELDRED, a Peasant.
 Peasant, Pilgrims, &c.
 IDONEA.
 Female Beggar.
 ELEANOR, Wife to ELDRED

*SCENE, Borders of England and Scotland.**TIME, the Reign of Henry III.*

READERS already acquainted with my Poems will recognise, in the following composition, some eight or ten lines, which I have not scrupled to retain in the places where they originally stood. It is proper however to add, that they would not have been used elsewhere, if I had foreseen the time when I might be induced to publish this Tragedy.

February 28, 1842.

ACT I.

*SCENE, road in a Wood.**WALLACE and LACY.*

Lacy. The Troop will be impatient ; let us hie
 Back to our post, and strip the Scottish Foray
 Of their rich Spoil, ere they recross the Border.
 —Pity that our young Chief will have no part
 In this good service.

Wal. Rather let us grieve
 That, in the undertaking which has caused
 His absence, he hath sought, whate'er his aim,
 Companionship with One of crooked ways,
 From whose perverted soul can come no good
 To our confiding, open-hearted, Leader.

Lacy. True ; and, remembering how the Band
 have proved
 That Oswald finds small favour in our sight,
 Well may we wonder he has gained such power
 Over our much-loved Captain.

Wal. I have heard
 Of some dark deed to which in early life
 His passion drove him—then a Voyager
 Upon the midland Sea. You knew his bearing
 In Palestine ?

Lacy. Where he despised alike
 Mohammedan and Christian. But enough ;
 Let us begone—the Band may else be foiled.

*[Exeunt.]**Enter MARMADUKE and WILFRED.*

Wil. Be cautious, my dear Master !

Mar. I perceive
 That fear is like a cloak which old men huddle
 About their love, as if to keep it warm.

Wil. Nay, but I grieve that we should part.
 This Stranger,
 For such he is—

Mar. Your busy fancies, Wilfred,
 Might tempt me to a smile ; but what of him ?

Wil. You know that you have saved his life.

Mar. I know it.

Wil. And that he hates you !—Pardon me, per-
 haps

That word was hasty.

Mar. Fy ! no more of it.

Wil. Dear Master ! gratitude's a heavy burden
 To a proud Soul.—Nobody loves this Oswald—
 Yourself, you do not love him.

Mar. I do more,
 I honour him. Strong feelings to his heart
 Are natural ; and from no one can be learnt
 More of man's thoughts and ways than his experience
 Has given him power to teach : and then for courage
 And enterprise—what perils hath he shunned ?
 What obstacles hath he failed to overcome ?
 Answer these questions, from our common know-
 ledge,
 And be at rest.

Wil. Oh, Sir !

Mar. Peace, my good Wilfred ;
Repair to Liddesdale, and tell the Band
I shall be with them in two days, at farthest.

Wil. May He whose eye is over all protect you !

[*Exit.*]

Enter OSWALD (a bunch of plants in his hand).

Osw. This wood is rich in plants and curious
simples.

Mar. (looking at them). The wild rose, and the
poppy, and the nightshade :

Which is your favorite, Oswald ?

Osw. That which, while it is
Strong to destroy, is also strong to heal—

[*Looking forward.*]

Not yet in sight !—We 'll saunter here awhile ;
They cannot mount the hill, by us unseen.

Mar. (a letter in his hand). It is no common
thing when one like you

Performs these delicate services, and therefore
I feel myself much bounden to you, Oswald ;
'Tis a strange letter this !—You saw her write it ?

Osw. And saw the tears with which she blotted it.

Mar. And nothing less would satisfy him ?

Osw. No less ;

For that another in his Child's affection
Should hold a place, as if 'twere robbery,
He seemed to quarrel with the very thought.
Besides, I know not what strange prejudice
Is rooted in his mind ; this Band of ours,
Which you 've collected for the noblest ends,
Along the confines of the Esk and Tweed
To guard the Innocent—he calls us " Outlaws ;"
And, for yourself, in plain terms he asserts
This garb was taken up that indolence
Might want no cover, and rapacity
Be better fed.

Mar. Ne'er may I own the heart
That cannot feel for one, helpless as he is.

Osw. Thou know'st me for a Man not easily
moved,

Yet was I grievously provoked to think
Of what I witnessed.

Mar. This day will suffice
To end her wrongs.

Osw. But if the blind Man's tale
Should yet be true ?

Mar. Would it were possible !
Did not the Soldier tell thee that himself,
And others who survived the wreck, beheld
The Baron Herbert perish in the waves
Upon the coast of Cyprus ?

Osw. Yes, even so,

And I had heard the like before : in sooth
The tale of this his quondam Barony
Is cunningly devised ; and, on the back
Of his forlorn appearance, could not fail
To make the proud and vain his tributaries,
And stir the pulse of lazy charity.
The seignories of Herbert are in Devon ;
We, neighbours of the Esk and Tweed : 'tis much
The Arch-impostor—

Mar. Treat him gently, Oswald ;
Though I have never seen his face, methinks,
There cannot come a day when I shall cease
To love him. I remember, when a Boy
Of scarcely seven years' growth, beneath the Elm
That casts its shade over our village school,
'Twas my delight to sit and hear Idonea
Repeat her Father's terrible adventures,
Till all the band of play-mates wept together ;
And that was the beginning of my love.
And, through all converse of our later years,
An image of this old Man still was present,
When I had been most happy. Pardon me
If this be idly spoken.

Osw. See, they come,

Two Travellers !

Mar. (points). The woman is Idonea.

Osw. And leading Herbert.

Mar. We must let them pass—
This thicket will conceal us. [*They step aside.*]

Enter IDONEA, leading HERBERT blind.

Idon. Dear Father, you sigh deeply ; ever since
We left the willow shade by the brook-side,
Your natural breathing has been troubled.

Her. Nay,

You are too fearful ; yet must I confess,
Our march of yesterday had better suited
A firmer step than mine.

Idon. That dismal Moor—
In spite of all the larks that cheered our path,
I never can forgive it : but how steadily
You paced along, when the bewildering moonlight
Mocked me with many a strange fantastic shape !—
I thought the Convent never would appear ;
It seemed to move away from us : and yet,
That you are thus the fault is mine ; for the air
Was soft and warm, no dew lay on the grass,
And midway on the waste ere night had fallen
I spied a Covert walled and roofed with sods—
A miniature ; belike some Shepherd-boy,
Who might have found a nothing-doing hour
Heavier than work, raised it : within that hut
We might have made a kindly bed of heath,
And thankfully there rested side by side

Wrapped in our cloaks, and, with recruited strength,
Have hailed the morning sun. But cheerily,
Father,—

That staff of yours, I could almost have heart
To fling 't away from you : you make no use
Of me, or of my strength ;—come, let me feel
That you do press upon me. There—indeed
You are quite exhausted. Let us rest awhile
On this green bank. [*He sits down.*]

Her. (*after some time*). Idonea, you are silent,
And I divine the cause.

Idon. Do not reproach me :
I pondered patiently your wish and will
When I gave way to your request ; and now,
When I behold the ruins of that face,
Those eyeballs dark—dark beyond hope of light,
And think that they were blasted for my sake,
The name of Marmaduke is blown away :
Father, I would not change that sacred feeling
For all this world can give.

Her. Nay, be composed :
Few minutes gone a faintness overspread
My frame, and I bethought me of two things
I ne'er had heart to separate—my grave,
And thee, my Child !

Idon. Believe me, honoured Sire !
'Tis weariness that breeds these gloomy fancies,
And you mistake the cause : you hear the woods
Resound with music, could you see the sun,
And look upon the pleasant face of Nature—

Her. I comprehend thee—I should be as cheerful
As if we two were twins ; two songsters bred
In the same nest, my spring-time one with thine.
My fancies, fancies if they be, are such
As come, dear Child ! from a far deeper source
Than bodily weariness. While here we sit
I feel my strength returning.—The bequest
Of thy kind Patroness, which to receive
We have thus far adventured, will suffice
To save thee from the extreme of penury ;
But when thy Father must lie down and die,
How wilt thou stand alone ?

Idon. Is he not strong ?
Is he not valiant ?

Her. Am I then so soon
Forgotten ? have my warnings passed so quickly
Out of thy mind ? My dear, my only, Child ;
Thou wouldst be leaning on a broken reed—
This Marmaduke—

Idon. O could you hear his voice :
Alas ! you do not know him. He is one
(I wot not what ill tongue has wronged him with you)
All gentleness and love. His face bespeaks
A deep and simple meekness : and that Soul,

Which with the motion of a virtuous act
Flashes a look of terror upon guilt,
Is, after conflict, quiet as the ocean,
By a miraculous finger, stilled at once.

Her. Unhappy Woman !

Idon. Nay, it was my duty
Thus much to speak ; but think not I forget—
Dear Father ! how *could* I forget and live—
You and the story of that doleful night
When, Antioch blazing to her topmost towers,
You rushed into the murderous flames, returned
Blind as the grave, but, as you oft have told me,
Clasping your infant Daughter to your heart.

Her. Thy Mother too !—scarce had I gained the
door,

I caught her voice ; she threw herself upon me,
I felt thy infant brother in her arms ;
She saw my blasted face—a tide of soldiers
That instant rushed between us, and I heard
Her last death-shriek, distinct among a thousand.

Idon. Nay, Father, stop not ; let me hear it all.

Her. Dear Daughter ! precious relic of that time—
For my old age, it doth remain with thee
To make it what thou wilt. Thou hast been told,
That when, on our return from Palestine,
I found how my domains had been usurped,
I took thee in my arms, and we began
Our wanderings together. Providence
At length conducted us to Rossland,—there,
Our melancholy story moved a Stranger
To take thee to her home—and for myself,
Soon after, the good Abbot of St. Cuthbert's
Supplied my helplessness with food and raiment,
And, as thou know'st, gave me that humble Cot
Where now we dwell.—For many years I bore
Thy absence, till old age and fresh infirmities
Exacted thy return, and our reunion.
I did not think that, during that long absence,
My Child, forgetful of the name of Herbert,
Had given her love to a wild Freebooter,
Who here, upon the borders of the Tweed,
Doth prey alike on two distracted Countries,
Traitor to both.

Idon. Oh, could you hear his voice !
I will not call on Heaven to vouch for me,
But let this kiss speak what is in my heart.

Enter a Peasant.

Pea. Good morrow, Strangers ! If you want a
Guide,
Let me have leave to serve you !

Idon. My Companion
Hath need of rest ; the sight of Hut or Hostel
Would be most welcome.

Pea. You white hawthorn gained,
You will look down into a dell, and there
Will see an ash from which a sign-board hangs;
The house is hidden by the shade. Old Man,
You seem worn out with travel—shall I support you?

Her. I thank you; but, a resting-place so near,
'Twere wrong to trouble you.

Pea. God speed you both.

[*Exit Peasant.*]

Her. Idonea, we must part. Be not alarmed—
'Tis but for a few days—a thought has struck me.

Idon. That I should leave you at this house, and
thence

Proceed alone. It shall be so; for strength
Would fail you ere our journey's end be reached.

[*Exit HERBERT supported by IDONEA.*]

Re-enter MARMADUKE and OSWALD.

Mar. This instant will we stop him—

Osw. Be not hasty,

For, sometimes, in despite of my conviction,
He tempted me to think the Story true;
'Tis plain he loves the Maid, and what he said
That savoured of aversion to thy name
Appeared the genuine colour of his soul—
Anxiety lest mischief should befall her
After his death.

Mar. I have been much deceived.

Osw. But sure he loves the Maiden, and never love
Could find delight to nurse itself so strangely,
Thus to torment her with inventions!—death—
There must be truth in this.

Mar. Truth in his story!
He must have felt it then, known what it was,
And in such wise to rack her gentle heart
Had been a tenfold cruelty.

Osw. Strange pleasures
Do we poor mortals cater for ourselves!
To see him thus provoke her tenderness
With tales of weakness and infirmity!
I'd wager on his life for twenty years.

Mar. We will not waste an hour in such a cause.

Osw. Why, this is noble! shake her off at once.

Mar. Her virtues are his instruments.—A Man
Who has so practised on the world's cold sense,
May well deceive his Child—what! leave her thus,
A prey to a deceiver?—no—no—no—
'Tis but a word and then—

Osw. Something is here
More than we see, or whence this strong aversion?
Marmaduke! I suspect unworthy tales
Have reached his ear—you have had enemies.

Mar. Enemies!—of his own coinage.

Osw. That may be,
But wherefore slight protection such as you

Have power to yield? perhaps he looks elsewhere.—
I am perplexed.

Mar. What hast thou heard or seen?

Osw. No—no—the thing stands clear of mystery;
(As you have said) he coins himself the slander
With which he taints her ear;—for a plain reason;
He dreads the presence of a virtuous man
Like you; he knows your eye would search his
heart,

Your justice stamp upon his evil deeds
The punishment they merit. All is plain:
It cannot be—

Mar. What cannot be?

Osw. Yet that a Father
Should in his love admit no rivalry,
And torture thus the heart of his own Child—

Mar. Nay, you abuse my friendship!

Osw. Heaven forbid!—
There was a circumstance, trifling indeed—
It struck me at the time—yet I believe
I never should have thought of it again
But for the scene which we by chance have wit-
nessed.

Mar. What is your meaning?

Osw. Two days gone I saw,
Though at a distance and he was disguised,
Hovering round Herbert's door, a man whose figure
Resembled much that cold voluptuary,
The villain, Clifford. He hates you, and he knows
Where he can stab you deepest.

Mar. Clifford never
Would stoop to skulk about a Cottage door—
It could not be.

Osw. And yet I now remember,
That, when your praise was warm upon my tongue,
And the blind Man was told how you had rescued
A maiden from the ruffian violence
Of this same Clifford, he became impatient
And would not hear me.

Mar. No—it cannot be—
I dare not trust myself with such a thought—
Yet whence this strange aversion? You are a man
Not used to rash conjectures—

Osw. If you deem it
A thing worth further notice, we must act
With caution, sift the matter artfully.

[*Exeunt MARMADUKE and OSWALD.*]

SCENE, the door of the Hostel.

HERBERT, IDONEA, and Host.

Her. (*seated*). As I am dear to you, remember,
Child!
This last request.

Idon. You know me, Sire ; farewell !

Her. And are you going then ? Come, come,
Idonea,

We must not part,—I have measured many a league
When these old limbs had need of rest,—and now
I will not play the sluggard.

Idon. Nay, sit down.

[Turning to Host.

Good Host, such tendance as you would expect
From your own Children, if yourself were sick,
Let this old Man find at your hands ; poor Leader,

[Looking at the dog.

We soon shall meet again. If thou neglect
This charge of thine, then ill befall thee !—Look,
The little fool is loth to stay behind.
Sir Host ! by all the love you bear to courtesy,
Take care of him, and feed the truant well.

Host. Fear not, I will obey you ;—but One so
young,

And One so fair, it goes against my heart
That you should travel unattended, Lady !—
I have a palfrey and a groom : the lad
Shall squire you, (would it not be better, Sir ?)
And for less fee than I would let him run
For any lady I have seen this twelvemonth.

Idon. You know, Sir, I have been too long your
guard

Not to have learnt to laugh at little fears.
Why, if a wolf should leap from out a thicket,
A look of mine would send him scouring back,
Unless I differ from the thing I am
When you are by my side.

Her. *Idonea,* wolves

Are not the enemies that move my fears.

Idon. No more, I pray, of this. Three days at
farthest

Will bring me back—protect him, Saints—farewell !

[Exit IDONEA.

Host. 'Tis never drought with us—St. Cuthbert
and his Pilgrims,

Thanks to them, are to us a stream of comfort :
Pity the Maiden did not wait a while ;
She could not, Sir, have failed of company.

Her. Now she is gone, I fain would call her back.

Host (calling). Holla !

Her. No, no, the business must be done.—
What means this riotous noise ?

Host. The villagers
Are flocking in—a wedding festival—
That's all—God save you, Sir.

Enter OSWALD.

Osw. Ha ! as I live,
The Baron Herbert.

Host. Mercy, the Baron Herbert !

Osw. So far into your journey ! on my life,
You are a lusty Traveller. But how fare you ?

Her. Well as the wreck I am permits. And
you, Sir ?

Osw. I do not see *Idonea*.

Her. Dutiful Girl,
She is gone before, to spare my weariness.

But what has brought you hither ?

Osw. A slight affair,

That will be soon despatched.

Her. Did Marmaduke

Receive that letter ?

Osw. Be at peace.—The tie
Is broken, you will hear no more of *him*.

Her. This is true comfort, thanks a thousand
times !—

That noise !—would I had gone with her as far
As the Lord Clifford's Castle : I have heard
That, in his milder moods, he has expressed
Compassion for me. His influence is great
With Henry, our good King ;—the Baron might
Have heard my suit, and urged my plea at Court.
No matter—he's a dangerous Man.—That noise !—
'Tis too disorderly for sleep or rest.

Idonea would have fears for me,—the Convent
Will give me quiet lodging. You have a boy, good
Host,

And he must lead me back.

Osw. You are most lucky ;
I have been waiting in the wood hard by
For a companion—here he comes ; our journey

Enter MARMADUKE.

Lies on your way ; accept us as your Guides.

Her. Alas ! I creep so slowly.

Osw. Never fear ;
We'll not complain of that.

Her. My limbs are stiff
And need repose. Could you but wait an hour ?

Osw. Most willingly !—Come, let me lead you in,
And, while you take your rest, think not of us ;
We'll stroll into the wood ; lean on my arm.

[Conducts HERBERT into the house. Exit MARMADUKE.

Enter Villagers.

Osw. (to himself coming out of the Hostel). I have
prepared a most apt Instrument—
The Vagrant must, no doubt, be loitering some-
where

About this ground ; she hath a tongue well skilled,
By mingling natural matter of her own
With all the daring fictions I have taught her,
To win belief, such as my plot requires.

[Exit OSWALD.

Enter more Villagers, a Musician among them.

Host (to them). Into the court, my Friend, and perch yourself

Aloft upon the elm-tree. Pretty Maids, Garlands and flowers, and cakes and merry thoughts, Are here, to send the sun into the west More speedily than you belike would wish.

SCENE changes to the Wood adjoining the Hostel—
MARMADUKE and OSWALD entering.

Mar. I would fain hope that we deceive ourselves: When first I saw him sitting there, alone, It struck upon my heart I know not how.

Osw. To-day will clear up all.—You marked a Cottage,

That ragged Dwelling, close beneath a rock
By the brook-side : it is the abode of One,
A Maiden innocent till ensnared by Clifford,
Who soon grew weary of her ; but, alas !
What she had seen and suffered turned her brain.
Cast off by her Betrayer, she dwells alone,
Nor moves her hands to any needful work :
She eats her food which every day the peasants
Bring to her hut ; and so the Wretch has lived
Ten years ; and no one ever heard her voice ;
But every night at the first stroke of twelve
She quits her house, and, in the neighbouring
Churchyard

Upon the self-same spot, in rain or storm,
She paces out the hour 'twixt twelve and one—
She paces round and round an Infant's grave,
And in the churchyard sod her feet have worn
A hollow ring ; they say it is knee-deep—
Ah ! what is here ?

[A female Beggar rises up, rubbing her eyes as if in sleep—a Child in her arms.]

Beg. Oh ! Gentlemen, I thank you ;
I've had the saddest dream that ever troubled
The heart of living creature.—My poor Babe
Was crying, as I thought, crying for bread
When I had none to give him ; whereupon,
I put a slip of foxglove in his hand,
Which pleased him so, that he was hushed at once :
When, into one of those same spotted bells
A bee came darting, which the Child with joy
Imprisoned there, and held it to his ear,
And suddenly grew black, as he would die.

Mar. We have no time for this, my babbling
Gossip ;

Here's what will comfort you. *[Gives her money.]*

Beg. The Saints reward you
For this good deed !—Well, Sirs, this passed away ;

And afterwards I fancied, a strange dog,
Trotting alone along the beaten road,
Came to my child as by my side he slept
And, fondling, licked his face, then on a sudden
Snapped fierce to make a morsel of his head :
But here he is, *[kissing the Child]* it must have
been a dream.

Osw. When next inclined to sleep, take my advice,
And put your head, good Woman, under cover.

Beg. Oh, sir, you would not talk thus, if you knew
What life is this of ours, how sleep will master
The weary-worn.—You gentlefolk have got
Warm chambers to your wish. I'd rather be
A stone than what I am.—But two nights gone,
The darkness overtook me—wind and rain
Beat hard upon my head—and yet I saw
A glow-worm, through the covert of the furze,
Shine calmly as if nothing ailed the sky :
At which I half accused the God in Heaven.—
You must forgive me.

Osw. Ay, and if you think
The Fairies are to blame, and you should chide
Your favourite saint—no matter—this good day
Has made amends.

Beg. Thanks to you both ; but, O sir !
How would you like to travel on whole hours
As I have done, my eyes upon the ground,
Expecting still, I knew not how, to find
A piece of money glittering through the dust.

Mar. This woman is a prater. Pray, good Lady !
Do you tell fortunes ?

Beg. Oh Sir, you are like the rest.
This Little-one—it cuts me to the heart—
Well ! they might turn a beggar from their doors,
But there are Mothers who can see the Babe
Here at my breast, and ask me where I bought it :
This they can do, and look upon my face—
But you, Sir, should be kinder.

Mar. Come hither, Fathers,
And learn what nature is from this poor Wretch !

Beg. Ay, Sir, there's nobody that feels for us.
Why now—but yesterday I overtook
A blind old Greybeard and accosted him,
I' th' name of all the Saints, and by the Mass
He should have used me better !—Charity !
If you can melt a rock, he is your man ;
But I'll be even with him—here again
Have I been waiting for him.

Osw. Well, but softly,
Who is it that hath wronged you ?

Beg. Mark you me ;
I'll point him out ;—a Maiden is his guide,
Lovely as Spring's first rose ; a little dog,
Tied by a woollen cord, moves on before

With look as sad as he were dumb ; the cur,
I owe him no ill will, but in good sooth
He does his Master credit.

Mar. As I live,

'Tis Herbert and no other !

Beg. 'Tis a feast to see him,
Lank as a ghost and tall, his shoulders bent,
And long beard white with age—yet evermore,
As if he were the only Saint on earth,
He turns his face to heaven.

Osw. But why so violent
Against this venerable Man ?

Beg. I'll tell you :
He has the very hardest heart on earth ;
I had as lief turn to the Friar's school
And knock for entrance, in mid holiday.

Mar. But to your story.

Beg. I was saying, Sir—
Well !—he has often spurned me like a toad,
But yesterday was worse than all ;—at last
I overtook him, Sirs, my Babe and I,
And begged a little aid for charity :
But he was snappish as a cottage cur.
Well then, says I—I'll out with it ; at which
I cast a look upon the Girl, and felt
As if my heart would burst ; and so I left him.

Osw. I think, good Woman, you are the very person
Whom, but some few days past, I saw in Eskdale,
At Herbert's door.

Beg. Ay ; and if truth were known
I have good business there.

Osw. I met you at the threshold,
And he seemed angry.

Beg. Angry ! well he might ;
And long as I can stir I'll dog him.—Yesterday,
To serve me so, and knowing that he owes
The best of all he has to me and mine.
But 'tis all over now.—That good old Lady
Has left a power of riches ; and I say it,
If there's a lawyer in the land, the knave
Shall give me half.

Osw. What's this ?—I fear, good Woman,
You have been insolent.

Beg. And there's the Baron,
I spied him skulking in his peasant's dress.

Osw. How say you ? in disguise ?—

Mar. But what's your business
With Herbert or his Daughter ?

Beg. Daughter ! truly—
But how's the day ?—I fear, my little Boy,
We've overslept ourselves.—Sirs, have you seen
him ? [Offers to go.]

Mar. I must have more of this ;—you shall not
stir

An inch, till I am answered. Know you aught
That doth concern this Herbert ?

Beg. You are provoked,
And will misuse me, Sir !

Mar. No trifling, Woman !—
Osw. You are as safe as in a sanctuary ;
Speak.

Mar. Speak !

Beg. He is a most hard-hearted Man.

Mar. Your life is at my mercy.

Beg. Do not harm me,
And I will tell you all !—You know not, Sir,
What strong temptations press upon the Poor.

Osw. Speak out.

Beg. Oh Sir, I've been a wicked Woman.

Osw. Nay, but speak out !

Beg. He flattered me, and said
What harvest it would bring us both ; and so,
I parted with the Child.

Mar. Parted with whom ?

Beg. Idonea, as he calls her ; but the Girl
Is mine.

Mar. Yours, Woman ! are you Herbert's wife ?

Beg. Wife, Sir ! his wife—not I ; my husband,
Sir,

Was of Kirkoswald—many a snowy winter
We've weathered out together. My poor Gilfred !
He has been two years in his grave.

Mar. Enough.

Osw. We've solved the riddle—Miscreant !

Mar. Do you,
Good Dame, repair to Liddesdale and wait
For my return ; be sure you shall have justice.

Osw. A lucky woman !—go, you have done good
service. [Aside.]

Mar. (to herself). Eternal praises on the power
that saved her !—

Osw. (gives her money). Here's for your little
boy—and when you christen him
I'll be his Godfather.

Beg. Oh Sir, you are merry with me.
In grange or farm this Hundred scarcely owns
A dog that does not know me.—These good Folks,
For love of God, I must not pass their doors ;
But I'll be back with my best speed : for you—
God bless and thank you both, my gentle Masters.

[Exit Beggar.]

Mar. (to herself). The cruel Viper !—Poor de-
voted Maid,
Now I do love thee.

Osw. I am thunderstruck.

Mar. Where is she—holla !

[Calling to the Beggar, who returns ; he looks at her
steadfastly.]

You are Idonea's Mother?—

Nay, be not terrified—it does me good
To look upon you.

Osw. (interrupting). In a peasant's dress
You saw, who was it?

Beg. Nay, I dare not speak;
He is a man, if it should come to his ears
I never shall be heard of more.

Osw. Lord Clifford?

Beg. What can I do? believe me, gentle Sirs,
I love her, though I dare not call her daughter.

Osw. Lord Clifford—did you see him talk with
Herbert?

Beg. Yes, to my sorrow—under the great oak
At Herbert's door—and when he stood beside
The blind Man—at the silent Girl he looked
With such a look—it makes me tremble, Sir,
To think of it.

Osw. Enough! you may depart.

Mar. (to himself). Father!—to God himself we
cannot give

A holier name; and, under such a mask,
To lead a Spirit, spotless as the blessed,
To that abhorred den of brutish vice!—
Oswald, the firm foundation of my life
Is going from under me; these strange discoveries—
Looked at from every point of fear or hope,
Duty, or love—involve, I feel, my ruin.

ACT II.

SCENE, A Chamber in the Hostel—OSWALD alone,
rising from a Table on which he had been
writing.

Osw. They chose him for their Chief!—what
covert part

He, in the preference, modest Youth, might take,
I neither know nor care. The insult bred
More of contempt than hatred; both are flown;
That either e'er existed is my shame:
'Twas a dull spark—a most unnatural fire
That died the moment the air breathed upon it.
—These fools of feeling are mere birds of winter
That haunt some barren island of the north,
Where, if a famishing man stretch forth his hand,
They think it is to feed them. I have left him
To solitary meditation;—now
For a few swelling phrases, and a flash
Of truth, enough to dazzle and to blind,
And he is mine for ever—here he comes.

Enter MARMADUKE.

Mar. These ten years she has moved her lips
all day

And never speaks!

Osw. Who is it?

Mar. I have seen her.

Osw. Oh! the poor tenant of that ragged home-
stead,

Her whom the Monster, Clifford, drove to madness.

Mar. I met a peasant near the spot; he told me,
These ten years she had sate all day alone
Within those empty walls.

Osw. I too have seen her;

Chancing to pass this way some six months gone,
At midnight, I betook me to the Churchyard:
The moon shone clear, the air was still, so still
The trees were silent as the graves beneath them.
Long did I watch, and saw her pacing round
Upon the self-same spot, still round and round,
Her lips for ever moving.

Mar. At her door

Rooted I stood; for, looking at the woman,
I thought I saw the skeleton of Idonea.

Osw. But the pretended Father—

Mar. Earthly law
Measures not crimes like his.

Osw. We rank not, happily,
With those who take the spirit of their rule
From that soft class of devotees who feel
Reverence for life so deeply, that they spare
The verminous brood, and cherish what they spare
While feeding on their bodies. Would that Idonea
Were present, to the end that we might hear
What she can urge in his defence; she loves him.

Mar. Yes, loves him; 'tis a truth that multiplies
His guilt a thousand-fold.

Osw. 'Tis most perplexing:
What must be done?

Mar. We will conduct her hither;
These walls shall witness it—from first to last
He shall reveal himself.

Osw. Happy are we,

Who live in these disputed tracts, that own
No law but what each man makes for himself;
Here justice has indeed a field of triumph.

Mar. Let us begone and bring her hither;—here
The truth shall be laid open, his guilt proved
Before her face. The rest be left to me.

Osw. You will be firm: but though we well may
trust

The issue to the justice of the cause,
Caution must not be flung aside; remember,
Yours is no common life. Self-stationed here,
Upon these savage confines, we have seen you

Stand like an isthmus 'twixt two stormy seas
That oft have checked their fury at your bidding.
'Mid the deep holds of Solway's mossy waste,
Your single virtue has transformed a Band
Of fierce barbarians into Ministers
Of peace and order. Aged men with tears
Have blessed their steps, the fatherless retire
For shelter to their banners. But it is,
As you must needs have deeply felt, it is
In darkness and in tempest that we seek
The majesty of Him who rules the world.
Benevolence, that has not heart to use
The wholesome ministry of pain and evil,
Becomes at last weak and contemptible.
Your generous qualities have won due praise,
But vigorous Spirits look for something more
Than Youth's spontaneous products ; and to-day
You will not disappoint them ; and hereafter——

Mar. You are wasting words ; hear me then,
once for all :

You are a Man—and therefore, if compassion,
Which to our kind is natural as life,
Be known unto you, you will love this Woman,
Even as I do ; but I should loathe the light,
If I could think one weak or partial feeling——

Osw. You will forgive me——

Mar. If I ever knew
My heart, could penetrate its inmost core,
'Tis at this moment.—Oswald, I have loved
To be the friend and father of the oppressed,
A comforter of sorrow ;—there is something
Which looks like a transition in my soul,
And yet it is not.—Let us lead him hither.

Osw. Stoop for a moment ; 'tis an act of justice ;
And where's the triumph if the delegate
Must fall in the execution of his office ?
The deed is done—if you will have it so—
Here where we stand—that tribe of vulgar wretches
(You saw them gathering for the festival)
Rush in—the villains seize us——

Mar. Seize !

Osw. Yes, they——

Men who are little given to sift and weigh—
Would wreak on us the passion of the moment.

Mar. The cloud will soon disperse—farewell—
but stay,
Thou wilt relate the story.

Osw. Am I neither
To bear a part in this Man's punishment,
Nor be its witness ?

Mar. I had many hopes
That were most dear to me, and some will bear
To be transferred to thee.

Osw. When I'm dishonored !

Mar. I would preserve thee. How may this be
done ?

Osw. By showing that you look beyond the instant.
A few leagues hence we shall have open ground,
And nowhere upon earth is place so fit
To look upon the deed. Before we enter
The barren Moor, hangs from a beetling rock
The shattered Castle in which Clifford oft
Has held infernal orgies—with the gloom,
And very superstition of the place,
Seasoning his wickedness. The Debauchee
Would there perhaps have gathered the first fruits
Of this mock Father's guilt.

Enter Host conducting HERBERT.

Host. The Baron Herbert

Attends your pleasure.

Osw. (to Host). We are ready—
(to HERBERT) Sir !

I hope you are refreshed.—I have just written
A notice for your Daughter, that she may know
What is become of you.—You'll sit down and
sign it ;

'Twill glad her heart to see her father's signature.

[Gives the letter he had written.

Her. Thanks for your care.

[Sits down and writes. Exit Host.

Osw. (aside to MARMADUKE). Perhaps it would
be useful

That you too should subscribe your name.

[MARMADUKE overlooks HERBERT—then writes—examines
the letter eagerly.

Mar. I cannot leave this paper.

[He puts it up, agitated.

Osw. (aside). Dastard ! Come.

[MARMADUKE goes towards HERBERT and supports him—
MARMADUKE tremblingly beckons OSWALD to take his
place.

Mar. (as he quits HERBERT). There is a palsy
in his limbs—he shakes.

[Exit OSWALD and HERBERT—MARMADUKE fol-
lowing.

SCENE changes to a Wood—a Group of Pilgrims
and IDONEA with them.

First Pil. A grove of darker and more lofty
shade

I never saw.

Sec. Pil. The music of the birds

Drops deadened from a roof so thick with leaves.

Old Pil. This news ! It made my heart leap up
with joy.

Idon. I scarcely can believe it.

Old Pil. Myself, I heard
The Sheriff read, in open Court, a letter

Which purported it was the royal pleasure
 The Baron Herbert, who, as was supposed,
 Had taken refuge in this neighbourhood,
 Should be forthwith restored. The hearing, Lady,
 Filled my dim eyes with tears.—When I returned
 From Palestine, and brought with me a heart,
 Though rich in heavenly, poor in earthly, comfort,
 I met your Father, then a wandering Outcast :
 He had a Guide, a Shepherd's boy ; but grieved
 He was that One so young should pass his youth
 In such sad service ; and he parted with him.
 We joined our tales of wretchedness together,
 And begged our daily bread from door to door.
 I talk familiarly to you, sweet Lady !
 For once you loved me.

Idon. You shall back with me
 And see your Friend again. The good old Man
 Will be rejoiced to greet you.

Old Pil. It seems but yesterday
 That a fierce storm o'ertook us, worn with travel,
 In a deep wood remote from any town.
 A cave that opened to the road presented
 A friendly shelter, and we entered in.

Idon. And I was with you ?

Old Pil. If indeed 'twas you—
 But you were then a tottering Little-one—
 We sate us down. The sky grew dark and darker :
 I struck my flint, and built up a small fire
 With rotten boughs and leaves, such as the winds
 Of many autumns in the cave had piled.
 Meanwhile the storm fell heavy on the woods ;
 Our little fire sent forth a cheering warmth
 And we were comforted, and talked of comfort ;
 But 'twas an angry night, and o'er our heads
 The thunder rolled in peals that would have made
 A sleeping man uneasy in his bed.
 O Lady, you have need to love your Father.
 His voice—methinks I hear it now, his voice
 When, after a broad flash that filled the cave,
 He said to me, that he had seen his Child,
 A face (no cherub's face more beautiful)
 Revealed by lustre brought with it from Heaven ;
 And it was you, dear Lady !

Idon. God be praised,
 That I have been his comforter till now !
 And will be so through every change of fortune
 And every sacrifice his peace requires.—
 Let us be gone with speed, that he may hear
 These joyful tidings from no lips but mine.

[*Exeunt IDONEA and Pilgrims.*]

SCENE, the Area of a half-ruined Castle—on one
 side the entrance to a dungeon—OSWALD and
 MARMADUKE pacing backwards and forwards.

Mar. 'Tis a wild night.

Osw. I'd give my cloak and bonnet
 For sight of a warm fire.

Mar. The wind blows keen ;
 My hands are numb.

Osw. Ha ! ha ! 'tis nipping cold.

[*Blowing his fingers.*]

I long for news of our brave Comrades ; Lacy
 Would drive those Scottish Rovers to their dens
 If once they blew a horn this side the Tweed.

Mar. I think I see a second range of Towers ;
 This castle has another Area—come,
 Let us examine it.

Osw. 'Tis a bitter night ;
 I hope Idonea is well housed. That horseman,
 Who at full speed swept by us where the wood
 Roared in the tempest, was within an ace
 Of sending to his grave our precious Charge :
 That would have been a vile mischance.

Mar. It would.

Osw. Justice had been most cruelly defrauded.

Mar. Most cruelly.

Osw. As up the steep we clomb,
 I saw a distant fire in the north-east ;
 I took it for the blaze of Cheviot Beacon :
 With proper speed our quarters may be gained
 To-morrow evening.

[*Looks restlessly towards the mouth of the dungeon.*]

Mar. When, upon the plank,
 I had led him 'cross the torrent, his voice blessed me :
 You could not hear, for the foam beat the rocks
 With deafening noise,—the benediction fell
 Back on himself ; but changed into a curse.

Osw. As well indeed it might.

Mar. And this you deem
 The fittest place ?

Osw. (aside). He is growing pitiful.

Mar. (listening). What an odd moaning that is !—

Osw. Mighty odd
 The wind should pipe a little, while we stand
 Cooling our heels in this way !—I 'll begin
 And count the stars.

Mar. (still listening). That dog of his, you are sure,
 Could not come after us—he *must* have perished ;
 The torrent would have dashed an oak to splinters.
 You said you did not like his looks—that he
 Would trouble us ; if he were here again,
 I swear the sight of him would quail me more
 Than twenty armies.

Osw. How?

Mar. The old blind Man,
When you had told him the mischance, was troubled

Even to the shedding of some natural tears
Into the torrent over which he hung,
Listening in vain.

Osw. He has a tender heart !

[OSWALD offers to go down into the dungeon.

Mar. How now, what mean you ?

Osw. Truly, I was going
To waken our stray Baron. Were there not
A farm or dwelling-house within five leagues,
We should deserve to wear a cap and bells,
Three good round years, for playing the fool here
In such a night as this.

Mar. Stop, stop.

Osw. Perhaps,
You 'd better like we should descend together,
And lie down by his side—what say you to it ?
Three of us—we should keep each other warm :
I 'll answer for it that our four-legged friend
Shall not disturb us ; further I 'll not engage ;
Come, come, for manhood's sake !

Mar. These drowsy shiverings,
This mortal stupor which is creeping over me,
What do they mean ? were this my single body
Opposed to armies, not a nerve would tremble :
Why do I tremble now ?—Is not the depth
Of this Man's crimes beyond the reach of thought ?
And yet, in plumbing the abyss for judgment,
Something I strike upon which turns my mind
Back on herself, I think, again—my breast
Concentres all the terrors of the Universe :
I look at him and tremble like a child.

Osw. Is it possible ?

Mar. One thing you noticed not :
Just as we left the glen a clap of thunder
Burst on the mountains with hell-rousing force.
This is a time, said he, when guilt may shudder ;
But there's a Providence for them who walk
In helplessness, when innocence is with them.
At this audacious blasphemy, I thought
The spirit of vengeance seemed to ride the air.

Osw. Why are you not the man you were that
moment ?

[He draws MARMADUKE to the dungeon.

Mar. You say he was asleep,—look at this arm,
And tell me if 'tis fit for such a work.

Oswald, Oswald ! [Leans upon OSWALD.

Osw. This is some sudden seizure !

Mar. A most strange faintness,—will you hunt
me out
A draught of water ?

Osw. Nay, to see you thus

Moves me beyond my bearing.—I will try
To gain the torrent's brink. [Exit OSWALD.

Mar. (after a pause). It seems an age
Since that Man left me.—No, I am not lost.

Her. (at the mouth of the dungeon). Give me your
hand ; where are you, Friends ? and tell me
How goes the night.

Mar. 'Tis hard to measure time,
In such a weary night, and such a place.

Her. I do not hear the voice of my friend Oswald.

Mar. A minute past, he went to fetch a draught
Of water from the torrent. 'Tis, you 'll say,
A cheerless beverage.

Her. How good it was in you
To stay behind !—Hearing at first no answer,
I was alarmed.

Mar. No wonder ; this is a place
That well may put some fears into your heart.

Her. Why so ? a roofless rock had been a com-
fort,

Storm-beaten and bewildered as we were ;
And in a night like this, to lend your cloaks
To make a bed for me !—My Girl will weep
When she is told of it.

Mar. This Daughter of yours
Is very dear to you.

Her. Oh ! but you are young ;
Over your head twice twenty years must roll,
With all their natural weight of sorrow and pain,
Ere can be known to you how much a Father
May love his Child.

Mar. Thank you, old Man, for this ! [Aside.

Her. Fallen am I, and worn out, a useless Man ;
Kindly have you protected me to-night,
And no return have I to make but prayers ;
May you in age be blest with such a daughter !—
When from the Holy Land I had returned
Sightless, and from my heritage was driven,
A wretched Outcast—but this strain of thought
Would lead me to talk fondly.

Mar. Do not fear ;
Your words are precious to my ears ; go on.

Her. You will forgive me, but my heart runs over.
When my old Leader slipped into the flood
And perished, what a piercing outcry you
Sent after him. I have loved you ever since.
You start—where are we ?

Mar. Oh, there is no danger ;
The cold blast struck me.

Her. 'Twas a foolish question.

Mar. But when you were an Outcast?—Heaven
is just ;
Your piety would not miss its due reward ;

The little Orphan then would be your succour,
And do good service, though she knew it not,

Her. I turned me from the dwellings of my
Fathers,

Where none but those who trampled on my rights
Seemed to remember me. To the wide world
I bore her, in my arms; her looks won pity;
She was my Raven in the wilderness,
And brought me food. Have I not cause to love
her?

Mar. Yes.

Her. More than ever Parent loved a Child?

Mar. Yes, yes.

Her. I will not murmur, merciful God!
I will not murmur; blasted as I have been,
Thou hast left me ears to hear my Daughter's voice,
And arms to fold her to my heart. Submissively
Thee I adore, and find my rest in faith.

Enter OSWALD.

Osw. Herbert!—confusion! (*aside*). Here it
is, my Friend,

[*Presents the Horn.*]

A charming beverage for you to carouse,
This bitter night.

Her. Ha! Oswald! ten bright crosses
I would have given, not many minutes gone,
To have heard your voice.

Osw. Your couch, I fear, good Baron,
Has been but comfortless; and yet that place,
When the tempestuous wind first drove us hither,
Felt warm as a wren's nest. You'd better turn
And under covert rest till break of day,
Or till the storm abate.

(*To MARMADUKE aside*). He has restored you.
No doubt you have been nobly entertained?
But soft!—how came he forth? The Night-mare
Conscience

Has driven him out of harbour?

Mar. I believe

You have guessed right.

Her. The trees renew their murmur:
Come, let us house together.

[*OSWALD conducts him to the dungeon.*]

Osw. (*returns*). Had I not
Esteemed you worthy to conduct the affair
To its most fit conclusion, do you think
I would so long have struggled with my Nature,
And smothered all that's man in me?—away!

[*Looking towards the dungeon.*]

This man's the property of him who best
Can feel his crimes. I have resigned a privilege;
It now becomes my duty to resume it.

Mar. Touch not a finger—

Osw. What then must be done?

Mar. Which way so'er I turn, I am perplexed.

Osw. Now, on my life, I grieve for you. The
misery

Of doubt is insupportable. Pity, the facts
Did not admit of stronger evidence;
Twelve honest men, plain men, would set us right;
Their verdict would abolish these weak scruples.

Mar. Weak! I am weak—there does my tor-
ment lie,

Feeding itself.

Osw. Verily, when he said

How his old heart would leap to hear her steps,
You thought his voice the echo of Idonea's.

Mar. And never heard a sound so terrible.

Osw. Perchance you think so now?

Mar. I cannot do it:
Twice did I spring to grasp his withered throat,
When such a sudden weakness fell upon me,
I could have dropped asleep upon his breast.

Osw. Justice—is there not thunder in the word?
Shall it be law to stab the petty robber
Who aims but at our purse; and shall this Par-
ricide—

Worse is he far, far worse (if foul dishonour
Be worse than death) to that confiding Creature
Whom he to more than filial love and duty
Hath falsely trained—shall he fulfil his purpose?
But you are fallen.

Mar. Fallen should I be indeed—
Murder—perhaps asleep, blind, old, alone,
Betrayed, in darkness! Here to strike the blow—
Away! away!—— [*Flings away his sword.*]

Osw. Nay, I have done with you:
We'll lead him to the Convent. He shall live,
And she shall love him. With unquestioned title
He shall be seated in his Barony,
And we too chant the praise of his good deeds.
I now perceive we do mistake our masters,
And most despise the men who best can teach us:
Henceforth it shall be said that bad men only
Are brave: Clifford is brave; and that old Man
Is brave.

[*Taking MARMADUKE's sword and giving it to him.*]

To Clifford's arms he would have led
His Victim—haply to this desolate house.

Mar. (*advancing to the dungeon*). It must be
ended!—

Osw. Softly; do not rouse him;
He will deny it to the last. He lies
Within the Vault, a spear's length to the left.

[*MARMADUKE descends to the dungeon.*]

(*Alone*). The Villains rose in mutiny to destroy me;
I could have quelled the Cowards, but this Stripling

Must needs step in, and save my life. The look
With which he gave the boon—I see it now !
The same that tempted me to loathe the gift.—
For this old venerable Grey-beard—faith
’Tis his own fault if he hath got a face
Which doth play tricks with them that look on it :
’Twas this that put it in my thoughts—that coun-
tenance—

His staff—his figure—Murder !—what, of whom ?
We kill a worn-out horse, and who but women
Sigh at the deed ? Hew down a withered tree,
And none look grave but dotards. He may live
To thank me for this service. Rainbow arches,
Highways of dreaming passion, have too long,
Young as he is, diverted wish and hope
From the unpretending ground we mortals tread ;—
Then shatter the delusion, break it up
And set him free. What follows ? I have learned
That things will work to ends the slaves o’ the world
Do never dream of. I have been what he—
This Boy—when he comes forth with bloody
hands—

Might envy, and am now,—but he shall know
What I am now— [*Goes and listens at the dungeon.*
Praying or parleying ?—tut !

Is he not eyeless ? He has been half-dead
These fifteen years—

Enter female Beggar with two or three of her Companions.
(*Turning abruptly.*) Ha ! speak—what Thing
art thou ?

(*Recognises her.*) Heavens ! my good Friend !

[*To her.*

Beg. Forgive me, gracious Sir !—

Osw. (*to her companions*). Begone, ye Slaves, or
I will raise a whirlwind
And send ye dancing to the clouds, like leaves.

[*They retire affrighted.*

Beg. Indeed we meant no harm ; we lodge
sometimes

In this deserted Castle—I repent me.

[*Oswald goes to the dungeon—listens—returns to
the Beggar.*

Osw. Woman, thou hast a helpless Infant—keep
Thy secret for its sake, or verily
That wretched life of thine shall be the forfeit.

Beg. I do repent me, Sir ; I fear the curse
Of that blind Man. ’Twas not your money, sir—

Osw. Begone !

Beg. (*going*). There is some wicked deed in
hand :

[*Aside.*

Would I could find the old Man and his Daughter.

[*Exit Beggar.*

MARMADUKE re-enters from the dungeon.

Osw. It is all over then ;—your foolish fears

Are hushed to sleep, by your own act and deed,
Made quiet as he is.

Mar.

Why came you down ?

And when I felt your hand upon my arm
And spake to you, why did you give no answer ?
Feared you to waken him ? he must have been
In a deep sleep. I whispered to him thrice.
There are the strangest echoes in that place !

Osw. Tut ! let them gabble till the day of doom.

Mar. Scarcely, by groping, had I reached the
Spot,

When round my wrist I felt a cord drawn tight,
As if the blind Man’s dog were pulling at it.

Osw. But after that ?

Mar.

The features of Idonea

Lurked in his face—

Osw.

Psha ! Never to these eyes

Will retribution show itself again

With aspect so inviting. Why forbid me
To share your triumph ?

Mar.

Yes, her very look,

Smiling in sleep—

Osw.

A pretty feat of Fancy !

Mar. Though but a glimpse, it sent me to my
prayers.

Osw. Is he alive ?

Mar.

What mean you ? who alive ?

Osw. Herbert ! since you will have it, Baron
Herbert ;

He who will gain his Seignory when Idonea
Hath become Clifford’s harlot—is he living ?

Mar. The old Man in that dungeon is alive.

Osw. Henceforth, then, will I never in camp or
field

Obey you more. Your weakness, to the Band,
Shall be proclaimed : brave Men, they all shall
hear it.

You a protector of humanity !

Avenger you of outraged innocence !

Mar. ’Twas dark—dark as the grave ; yet did
I see,

Saw him—his face turned toward me ; and I tell
thee

Idonea’s filial countenance was there

To baffle me—it put me to my prayers.

Upwards I cast my eyes, and, through a crevice,
Beheld a star twinkling above my head,
And, by the living God, I could not do it.

[*Sinks exhausted.*

Osw. (*to himself*). Now may I perish if this turn
do more

Than make me change my course.

(*To MARMADUKE.*)

Dear Marmaduke,

My words were rashly spoken ; I recal them :

I feel my error ; shedding human blood
Is a most serious thing.

Mar. Not I alone,
Thou too art deep in guilt.

Osw. We have indeed
Been most presumptuous. There is guilt in this,
Else could so strong a mind have ever known
These trepidations ? Plain it is that Heaven
Has marked out this foul Wretch as one whose
crimes

Must never come before a mortal judgment-seat,
Or be chastised by mortal instruments.

Mar. A thought that's worth a thousand
worlds ! [*Goes towards the dungeon.*]

Osw. I grieve
That, in my zeal, I have caused you so much pain.
Mar. Think not of that ! 'tis over—we are safe.
Osw. (*as if to himself, yet speaking aloud*). The
truth is hideous, but how stifle it ?

[*Turning to MARMADUKE.*]

Give me your sword—nay, here are stones and
fragments,

The least of which would beat out a man's brains ;
Or you might drive your head against that wall.
No ! this is not the place to hear the tale :
It should be told you pinioned in your bed,
Or on some vast and solitary plain
Blown to you from a trumpet.

Mar. Why talk thus ?
Whate'er the monster brooding in your breast
I care not : fear I have none, and cannot fear—

[*The sound of a horn is heard.*]

That horn again—'Tis some one of our Troop ;
What do they here ? Listen !

Osw. What ! dogged like thieves !

Enter WALLACE and LACY, &c.

Lacy. You are found at last, thanks to the
vagrant Troop
For not misleading us.

Osw. (*looking at WALLACE*). That subtle Grey-
beard—

I'd rather see my father's ghost.

Lacy (*to MARMADUKE*). My Captain,
We come by order of the Band. Belike
You have not heard that Henry has at last
Dissolved the Barons' League, and sent abroad
His Sheriffs with fit force to reinstate
The genuine owners of such Lands and Baronies
As, in these long commotions, have been seized.
His Power is this way tending. It befits us
To stand upon our guard, and with our swords
Defend the innocent.

Mar. Lacy ! we look
But at the surfaces of things ; we hear

Of towns in flames, fields ravaged, young and old
Driven out in troops to want and nakedness ;
Then grasp our swords and rush upon a cure
That flatters us, because it asks not thought :
The deeper malady is better hid ;
The world is poisoned at the heart.

Lacy. What mean you ?

Wal. (*whose eye has been fixed suspiciously upon
OSWALD*). Ay, what is it you mean ?

Mar. Harkee, my Friends ;—
[*Appearing gay.*]

Were there a Man who, being weak and helpless
And most forlorn, should bribe a Mother, pressed
By penury, to yield him up her Daughter,
A little Infant, and instruct the Babe,
Prattling upon his knee, to call him Father—

Lacy. Why, if his heart be tender, that offence
I could forgive him.

Mar. (*going on*). And should he make the Child
An instrument of falsehood, should he teach her
To stretch her arms, and dim the gladsome light
Of infant playfulness with piteous looks
Of misery that was not—

Lacy. Troth, 'tis hard—
But in a world like ours—

Mar. (*changing his tone*). This self-same Man—
Even while he printed kisses on the cheek
Of this poor Babe, and taught its innocent tongue
To lisp the name of Father—could he look
To the unnatural harvest of that time
When he should give her up, a Woman grown,
To him who bid the highest in the market
Of foul pollution—

♦ *Lacy.* The whole visible world
Contains not such a Monster !

Mar. For this purpose
Should he resolve to taint her Soul by means
Which bathe the limbs in sweat to think of them ;
Should he, by tales which would draw tears from iron,
Work on her nature, and so turn compassion
And gratitude to ministers of vice,
And make the spotless spirit of filial love
Prime mover in a plot to damn his Victim
Both soul and body—

Wal. 'Tis too horrible ;
Oswald, what say you to it ?

Lacy. Hew him down,
And fling him to the ravens.

Mar. But his aspect
It is so meek, his countenance so venerable.

Wal. (*with an appearance of mistrust*). But how,
what say you, Oswald ?

Lacy. (*at the same moment*). Stab him, were it
Before the Altar.

Mar. What, if he were sick,
Tottering upon the very verge of life,
And old, and blind——

Lacy. Blind, say you ?
Osw. (coming forward). Are we Men,
Or own we baby Spirits ? Genuine courage
Is not an accidental quality,
A thing dependent for its casual birth
On opposition and impediment.
Wisdom, if Justice speak the word, beats down
The giant's strength ; and, at the voice of Justice,
Spare not the worm. The giant and the worm——
She weighs them in one scale. The wiles of woman,
And craft of age, seducing reason, first
Made weakness a protection, and obscured
The moral shapes of things. His tender cries
And helpless innocence—do they protect
The infant lamb ? and shall the infirmities,
Which have enabled this enormous Culprit
To perpetrate his crimes, serve as a Sanctuary
To cover him from punishment ? Shame !—Justice,
Admitting no resistance, bends alike
The feeble and the strong. She needs not here
Her bonds and chains, which make the mighty feeble.
—We recognise in this old Man a victim
Prepared already for the sacrifice.

Lacy. By heaven, his words are reason !
Osw. Yes, my Friends,
His countenance is meek and venerable ;
And, by the Mass, to see him at his prayers !—
I am of flesh and blood, and may I perish
When my heart does not ache to think of it !—
Poor Victim ! not a virtue under heaven
But what was made an engine to ensnare thee ;
But yet I trust, Idonea, thou art safe.

Lacy. Idonea !
Wal. How ! what ? your Idonea ?
[To MARMADUKE.]

Mar. Mine ;
But now no longer mine. You know Lord Clifford ;
He is the Man to whom the Maiden—pure
As beautiful, and gentle and benign,
And in her ample heart loving even me—
Was to be yielded up.

Lacy. Now, by the head
Of my own child, this Man must die ; my hand,
A worthier wanting, shall itself entwine
In his grey hairs !—

Mar. (to LACY). I love the Father in thee.
You know me, Friends ; I have a heart to feel,
And I have felt, more than perhaps becomes me
Or duty sanctions.

Lacy. We will have ample justice.
Who are we, Friends ? Do we not live on ground

Where Souls are self-defended, free to grow
Like mountain oaks rocked by the stormy wind.
Mark the Almighty Wisdom, which decreed
This monstrous crime to be laid open—*here*,
Where Reason has an eye that she can use,
And Men alone are Umpires. To the Camp
He shall be led, and there, the Country round
All gathered to the spot, in open day
Shall Nature be avenged.

Osw. 'Tis nobly thought ;
His death will be a monument for ages.

Mar. (to LACY). I thank you for that hint. He
shall be brought
Before the Camp, and would that best and wisest
Of every country might be present. There,
His crime shall be proclaimed ; and for the rest
It shall be done as Wisdom shall decide :
Meanwhile, do you two hasten back and see
That all is well prepared.

Wal. We will obey you.
(*Aside.*) But softly ! we must look a little nearer.
Mar. Tell where you found us. At some future
time
I will explain the cause. [Exit.

ACT III.

SCENE, *the door of the Hostel, a group of Pilgrims as
before ; IDONEA and the Host among them.*

Host. Lady, you'll find your Father at the Convent
As I have told you : He left us yesterday
With two Companions ; one of them, as seemed,
His most familiar Friend. (*Going.*) There was a
letter

Of which I heard them speak, but that I fancy
Has been forgotten.

Idon. (to Host). Farewell !
Host. Gentle pilgrims,
St. Cuthbert speed you on your holy errand.
[Exit IDONEA and Pilgrims.]

SCENE, *a desolate Moor.*

OSWALD (*alone*).

Osw. Carry him to the Camp ! Yes, to the Camp.
Oh, Wisdom ! a most wise resolve ! and then,
That half a word should blow it to the winds !
This last device must end my work.—Methinks
It were a pleasant pastime to construct
A scale and table of belief—as thus—
Two columns, one for passion, one for proof ;

Each rises as the other falls : and first,
 Passion a unit and *against* us—proof—
 Nay, we must travel in another path,
 Or we're stuck fast for ever ;—passion, then,
 Shall be a unit *for* us ; proof—no, passion !
 We'll not insult thy majesty by time,
 Person, and place—the where, the when, the how,
 And all particulars that dull brains require
 To constitute the spiritless shape of Fact,
 They bow to, calling the idol, Demonstration.
 A whipping to the Moralists who preach
 That misery is a sacred thing : for me,
 I know no cheaper engine to degrade a man,
 Nor any half so sure. This Stripling's mind
 Is shaken till the dregs float on the surface ;
 And, in the storm and anguish of the heart,
 He talks of a transition in his Soul,
 And dreams that he is happy. We dissect
 The senseless body, and why not the mind ?—
 These are strange sights—the mind of man,
 upturned,
 Is in all natures a strange spectacle ;
 In some a hideous one—hem ! shall I stop ?
 No.—Thoughts and feelings will sink deep, but then
 They have no substance. Pass but a few minutes,
 And something shall be done which Memory
 May touch, whene'er her Vassals are at work.

Enter MARMADUKE, from behind.

Osw. (turning to meet him). But listen, for
 my peace—

Mar. Why, I *believe* you.

Osw. But hear the proofs—

Mar. Ay, prove that when two peas
 Lie snugly in a pod, the pod must then
 Be larger than the peas—prove this—'twere matter
 Worthy the hearing. Fool was I to dream
 It ever could be otherwise !

Osw. Last night

When I returned with water from the brook,
 I overheard the Villains—every word
 Like red-hot iron burnt into my heart.
 Said one, "It is agreed on. The blind Man
 Shall feign a sudden illness, and the Girl,
 Who on her journey must proceed alone,
 Under pretence of violence, be seized.
 She is," continued the detested Slave,
 "She is right willing—strange if she were not !—
 They say, Lord Clifford is a savage man ;
 But, faith, to see him in his silken tunic,
 Fitting his low voice to the minstrel's harp,
 There's witchery in 't. I never knew a maid
 That could withstand it. True," continued he,
 "When we arranged the affair, she wept a little

(Not the less welcome to my Lord for that)
 And said, 'My Father he will have it so'."

Mar. I am your hearer.

Osw.

This I caught, and more
 That may not be retold to any ear.
 The obstinate bolt of a small iron door
 Detained them near the gateway of the Castle.
 By a dim lantern's light I saw that wreaths
 Of flowers were in their hands, as if designed
 For festive decoration ; and they said,
 With brutal laughter and most foul allusion,
 That they should share the banquet with their Lord
 And his new Favorite.

Mar. Misery !—

Osw.

I knew

How you would be disturbed by this dire news,
 And therefore chose this solitary Moor,
 Here to impart the tale, of which, last night,
 I strove to ease my mind, when our two Comrades,
 Commissioned by the Band, burst in upon us.

Mar. Last night, when moved to lift the avenging
 steel,

I did believe all things were shadows—yea,
 Living or dead all things were bodiless,
 Or but the mutual mockeries of body,
 Till that same star summoned me back again.
 Now I could laugh till my ribs ached. Oh Fool !
 To let a creed, built in the heart of things,
 Dissolve before a twinkling atom !—Oswald,
 I could fetch lessons out of wiser schools
 Than you have entered, were it worth the pains.
 Young as I am, I might go forth a teacher,
 And you should see how deeply I could reason
 Of love in all its shapes, beginnings, ends ;
 Of moral qualities in their diverse aspects ;
 Of actions, and their laws and tendencies.

Osw. You take it as it merits—

Mar.

One a King,

General or Cham, Sultan or Emperor,
 Strews twenty acres of good meadow-ground
 With carcases, in lineament and shape
 And substance, nothing differing from his own,
 But that they cannot stand up of themselves ;
 Another sits i' th' sun, and by the hour
 Floats kinecups in the brook—a Hero one
 We call, and scorn the other as Time's spend-
 thrift ;

But have they not a world of common ground
 To occupy—both fools, or wise alike,
 Each in his way ?

Osw.

Troth, I begin to think so.

Mar. Now for the corner-stone of my philosophy:
 I would not give a denier for the man
 Who, on such provocation as this earth

Yields, could not chuck his babe beneath the chin,
And send it with a fillip to its grave.

Osw. Nay, you leave me behind.

Mar. That such a One,
So pious in demeanour ! in his look
So saintly and so pure !——Hark'ee, my Friend,
I'll plant myself before Lord Clifford's Castle,
A surly mastiff kennels at the gate,
And he shall howl and I will laugh, a medley
Most tunable.

Osw. In faith, a pleasant scheme ;
But take your sword along with you, for that
Might in such neighbourhood find seemly use.—
But first, how wash our hands of this old Man ?

Mar. Oh yes, that mole, that viper in the path ;
Plague on my memory, him I had forgotten.

Osw. You know we left him sitting—see him
yonder.

Mar. Ha ! ha !—

Osw. As 'twill be but a moment's work,
I will stroll on ; you follow when 'tis done.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE *changes to another part of the Moor at a short distance*—HERBERT is discovered seated on a stone.

Her. A sound of laughter, too !—'tis well—I
feared,

The Stranger had some pitiable sorrow
Pressing upon his solitary heart.
Hush !—'tis the feeble and earth-loving wind
That creeps along the bells of the crisp heather.
Alas ! 'tis cold—I shiver in the sunshine—
What can this mean ? There is a psalm that speaks
Of God's parental mercies—with Idonea
I used to sing it.—Listen !—what foot is there ?

Enter MARMADUKE.

Mar. (*aside—looking at HERBERT.*) And I have
loved this Man ! and she hath loved him !
And I loved her, and she loves the Lord Clifford !
And there it ends ;—if this be not enough
To make mankind merry for evermore,
Then plain it is as day, that eyes were made
For a wise purpose—verily to weep with !

[*Looking round.*]

A pretty prospect this, a masterpiece
Of Nature, finished with most curious skill !
(*To HERBERT.*) Good Baron, have you ever
practised tillage ?

Pray tell me what this land is worth by the acre ?

Her. How glad I am to hear your voice ! I know not
Wherein I have offended you ;—last night
I found in you the kindest of Protectors ;

This morning, when I spoke of weariness,
You from my shoulder took my scrip and threw it
About your own ; but for these two hours past
Once only have you spoken, when the lark
Whirled from among the fern beneath our feet,
And I, no coward in my better days,
Was almost terrified.

Mar. That 's excellent !—
So, you bethought you of the many ways
In which a man may come to his end, whose crimes
Have roused all Nature up against him—pshaw !—

Her. For mercy's sake, is nobody in sight ?
No traveller, peasant, herdsman ?

Mar. Not a soul :
Here is a tree, ragged, and bent, and bare,
That turns its goat's-beard flakes of pea-green moss
From the stern breathing of the rough sea-wind ;
This have we, but no other company :
Commend me to the place. If a man should die
And leave his body here, it were all one
As he were twenty fathoms underground.

Her. Where is our common Friend ?

Mar. A ghost, methinks—
The Spirit of a murdered man, for instance—
Might have fine room to ramble about here,
A grand domain to squeak and gibber in.

Her. Lost Man ! if thou have any close-pent
guilt

Pressing upon thy heart, and this the hour
Of visitation——

Mar. A bold word from you !

Her. Restore him, Heaven !

Mar. The desperate Wretch !—A Flower,
Fairest of all flowers, was she once, but now
They have snapped her from the stem—Poh ! let
her lie

Besoiled with mire, and let the houseless snail
Feed on her leaves. You knew her well—ay,
there,

Old Man ! you were a very Lynx, you knew
The worm was in her——

Her. Mercy ! Sir, what mean you ?

Mar. You have a Daughter !

Her. Oh that she were here !—
She hath an eye that sinks into all hearts,
And if I have in aught offended you,
Soon would her gentle voice make peace between
us.

Mar. (*aside.*) I do believe he weeps—I could
weep too——

There is a vein of her voice that runs through his :
Even such a Man my fancy bodied forth
From the first moment that I loved the Maid ;
And for his sake I loved her more : these tears——

I did not think that aught was left in me
Of what I have been—yes, I thank thee, Heaven !
One happy thought has passed across my mind.
—It may not be—I am cut off from man ;
No more shall I be man—no more shall I
Have human feelings !—(To HERBERT)—Now, for
a little more

About your Daughter !

Her. Troops of armed men,
Met in the roads, would bless us ; little children,
Rushing along in the full tide of play,
Stood silent as we passed them ! I have heard
The boisterous carman, in the miry road,
Check his loud whip and hail us with mild voice,
And speak with milder voice to his poor beasts.

Mar. And whither were you going ?

Her. Learn, young Man,
To fear the virtuous, and reverence misery,
Whether too much for patience, or, like mine,
Softened till it becomes a gift of mercy.

Mar. Now, this is as it should be !

Her. I am weak !—
My Daughter does not know how weak I am ;
And, as thou see'st, under the arch of heaven
Here do I stand, alone, to helplessness,
By the good God, our common Father, doomed !—
But I had once a spirit and an arm——

Mar. Now, for a word about your Barony :
I fancy when you left the Holy Land,
And came to—what's your title—eh ? your claims
Were undisputed !

Her. Like a mendicant,
Whom no one comes to meet, I stood alone ;—
I murmured—but, remembering Him who feeds
The pelican and ostrich of the desert,
From my own threshold I looked up to Heaven
And did not want glimmerings of quiet hope.
So, from the court I passed, and down the brook,
Led by its murmur, to the ancient oak
I came ; and when I felt its cooling shade,
I sate me down, and cannot but believe—
While in my lap I held my little Babe
And clasped her to my heart, my heart that ached
More with delight than grief—I heard a voice
Such as by Cherith on Elijah called ;
It said, "I will be with thee." A little boy,
A shepherd-lad, ere yet my trance was gone,
Hailed us as if he had been sent from heaven,
And said, with tears, that he would be our guide :
I had a better guide—that innocent Babe—
Her, who hath saved me, to this hour, from harm,
From cold, from hunger, penury, and death ;
To whom I owe the best of all the good
I have, or wish for, upon earth—and more

And higher far than lies within earth's bounds :
Therefore I bless her : when I think of Man,
I bless her with sad spirit,—when of God,
I bless her in the fulness of my joy !

Mar. The name of daughter in his mouth, he
prays !

With nerves so steady, that the very flies
Sit unmolested on his staff.—Innocent !—
If he were innocent—then he would tremble
And be disturbed, as I am. (*Turning aside*). I
have read

In Story, what men now alive have witnessed,
How, when the People's mind was racked with
doubt,

Appeal was made to the great Judge : the
Accused

With naked feet walked over burning ploughshares.
Here is a Man by Nature's hand prepared
For a like trial, but more merciful.
Why else have I been led to this bleak Waste ?
Bare is it, without house or track, and destitute
Of obvious shelter, as a shipless sea.

Here will I leave him—here—All-seeing God !
Such as *he* is, and sore perplexed as I am,
I will commit him to this final *Ordeal* !—
He heard a voice—a shepherd-lad came to him
And was his guide ; if once, why not again,
And in this desert ? If never—then the whole
Of what he says, and looks, and does, and is,
Makes up one damning falsehood. Leave him here
To cold and hunger !—Pain is of the heart,
And what are a few throes of bodily suffering
If they can waken one pang of remorse ?

[*Goes up to HERBERT.*]

Old Man ! my wrath is as a flame burnt out,
It cannot be rekindled. Thou art here
Led by my hand to save thee from perdition ;
Thou wilt have time to breathe and think——

Her. Oh, Mercy !

Mar. I know the need that all men have of mercy,
And therefore leave thee to a righteous judgment.

Her. My Child, my blessed Child !

Mar. No more of that ;
Thou wilt have many guides if thou art innocent ;
Yea, from the utmost corners of the earth,
That Woman will come o'er this Waste to save thee.

[*He pauses and looks at HERBERT's staff.*]

Ha ! what is here ? and carved by her own hand !

[*Reads upon the staff.*]

"I am eyes to the blind, saith the Lord.
He that puts his trust in me shall not fail !"
Yes, be it so ;—repent and be forgiven—
God and that staff are now thy only guides.

[*He leaves HERBERT on the Moor.*]

SCENE, *an eminence, a Beacon on the summit.*

LACY, WALLACE, LENNOX, &c. &c.

Several of the Band (confusedly). But patience !

One of the Band. Curses on that Traitor,
Oswald !—

Our Captain made a prey to foul device !—

Len. (to Wal.). His tool, the wandering Beggar,
made last night

A plain confession, such as leaves no doubt,
Knowing what otherwise we know too well,
That she revealed the truth. Stand by me now ;
For rather would I have a nest of vipers
Between my breast-plate and my skin, than make
Oswald my special enemy, if you
Deny me your support.

Lacy. We have been fooled—
But for the motive ?

Wal. Natures such as his
Spin motives out of their own bowels, Lacy !
I learn'd this when I was a Confessor.
I know him well ; there needs no other motive
Than that most strange incontinence in crime
Which haunts this Oswald. Power is life to him
And breath and being ; where he cannot govern,
He will destroy.

Lacy. To have been trapped like moles !—
Yes, you are right, we need not hunt for motives :
There is no crime from which this man would shrink ;
He reckons not human law ; and I have noticed
That often when the name of God is uttered,
A sudden blankness overspreads his face.

Len. Yet, reasoner as he is, his pride has built
Some uncouth superstition of its own.

Wal. I have seen traces of it.

Len. Once he headed
A band of Pirates in the Norway seas ;
And when the King of Denmark summoned him
To the oath of fealty, I well remember,
'Twas a strange answer that he made ; he said,
"I hold of Spirits, and the Sun in heaven."

Lacy. He is no madman.

Wal. A most subtle doctor
Were that man, who could draw the line that parts
Pride and her daughter, Cruelty, from Madness,
That should be scourged, not pitied. Restless
Minds,

Such Minds as find amid their fellow-men
No heart that loves them, none that they can love,
Will turn perforce and seek for sympathy
In dim relation to imagined Beings.

One of the Band. What if he mean to offer up
our Captain

An expiation and a sacrifice
To those infernal fiends !

Wal. Now, if the event
Should be as Lennox has foretold, then swear,
My Friends, his heart shall have as many wounds
As there are daggers here.

Lacy. What need of swearing !

One of the Band. Let us away !

Another. Away !

A third. Hark ! how the horns
Of those Scotch Rovers echo through the vale.

Lacy. Stay you behind ; and when the sun is down,
Light up this beacon.

One of the Band. You shall be obeyed.
[They go out together.]

SCENE, *the Wood on the edge of the Moor.*

MARMADUKE (*alone*).

Mar. Deep, deep and vast, vast beyond human
thought,

Yet calm.—I could believe, that there was here
The only quiet heart on earth. In terror,
Remembered terror, there is peace and rest.

Enter OSWALD.

Osw. Ha ! my dear Captain.

Mar. A later meeting, Oswald,
Would have been better timed.

Osw. Alone, I see ;
You have done your duty. I had hopes, which now
I feel that you will justify.

Mar. I had fears,
From which I have freed myself—but 'tis my wish
To be alone, and therefore we must part.

Osw. Nay, then—I am mistaken. There's a
weakness

About you still ; you talk of solitude—
I am your friend.

Mar. What need of this assurance
At any time ? and why given now ?

Osw. Because
You are now in truth my Master ; you have
taught me

What there is not another living man
Had strength to teach ;—and therefore gratitude
Is bold, and would relieve itself by praise.

Mar. Wherefore press this on me ?

Osw. Because I feel
That you have shown, and by a signal instance,
How they who would be just must seek the rule
By diving for it into their own bosoms.
To-day you have thrown off a tyranny
That lives but in the torpid acquiescence

Of our emasculated souls, the tyranny
Of the world's masters, with the musty rules
By which they uphold their craft from age to age :
You have obeyed the only law that sense
Submits to recognise ; the immediate law,
From the clear light of circumstances, flashed
Upon an independent Intellect.
Henceforth new prospects open on your path ;
Your faculties should grow with the demand ;
I still will be your friend, will cleave to you
Through good and evil, obloquy and scorn,
Oft as they dare to follow on your steps.

Mar. I would be left alone.

Osw. (exultingly). I know your motives !
I am not of the world's presumptuous judges,
Who damn where they can neither see nor feel,
With a hard-hearted ignorance ; your struggles
I witness'd, and now hail your victory.

Mar. Spare me awhile that greeting.

Osw. It may be,
That some there are, squeamish half-thinking
cowards,

Who will turn pale upon you, call you murderer,
And you will walk in solitude among them.
A mighty evil for a strong-built mind !—
Join twenty tapers of unequal height
And light them joined, and you will see the less
How 'twill burn down the taller ; and they all
Shall prey upon the tallest. Solitude !—
The Eagle lives in Solitude !

Mar. Even so,
The Sparrow so on the house-top, and I,
The weakest of God's creatures, stand resolved
To abide the issue of my act, alone.

Osw. Now would you ? and for ever ?—My young
Friend,

As time advances either we become
The prey or masters of our own past deeds.
Fellowship we *must* have, willing or no ;
And if good Angels fail, slack in their duty,
Substitutes, turn our faces where we may,
Are still forthcoming ; some which, though they bear
Ill names, can render no ill services,
In recompense for what themselves required.
So meet extremes in this mysterious world,
And opposites thus melt into each other.

Mar. Time, since Man first drew breath, has
never moved

With such a weight upon his wings as now ;
But they will soon be lightened.

Osw. Ay, look up—
Cast round you your mind's eye, and you will learn
Fortitude is the child of Enterprise :
Great actions move our admiration, chiefly

Because they carry in themselves an earnest
That we can suffer greatly.

Mar.

Very true.

Osw. Action is transitory—a step, a blow,
The motion of a muscle—this way or that—
'Tis done, and in the after-vacancy
We wonder at ourselves like men betrayed :
Suffering is permanent, obscure and dark,
And shares the nature of infinity.

Mar. Truth—and I feel it.

Osw. What ! if you had bid
Eternal farewell to unmingled joy
And the light dancing of the thoughtless heart ;
It is the toy of fools, and little fit
For such a world as this. The wise abjure
All thoughts whose idle composition lives
In the entire forgetfulness of pain.
—I see I have disturbed you.

Mar.

By no means.

Osw. Compassion !—pity !—pride can do without
them ;

And what if you should never know them more !—
He is a puny soul who, feeling pain,
Finds ease because another feels it too.
If e'er I open out this heart of mine
It shall be for a nobler end—to teach
And not to purchase puling sympathy.
—Nay, you are pale.

Mar.

It may be so.

Osw. Remorse—
It cannot live with thought ; think on, think on,
And it will die. What ! in this universe,
Where the least things control the greatest, where
The faintest breath that breathes can move a world ;
What ! feel remorse, where, if a cat had sneezed,
A leaf had fallen, the thing had never been
Whose very shadow gnaws us to the vitals.

Mar. Now, whither are you wandering ? That
a man

So used to suit his language to the time,
Should thus so widely differ from himself—
It is most strange.

Osw. Murder !—what's in the word !—

I have no cases by me ready made
To fit all deeds. Carry him to the Camp !—
A shallow project ;—you of late have seen
More deeply, taught us that the institutes
Of Nature, by a cunning usurpation
Banished from human intercourse, exist
Only in our relations to the brutes
That make the fields their dwelling. If a snake
Crawl from beneath our feet we do not ask
A license to destroy him : our good governors
Hedge in the life of every pest and plague

That bears the shape of man; and for what purpose,

But to protect themselves from extirpation?—
This flimsy barrier you have overleaped.

Mar. My Office is fulfilled—the Man is now
Delivered to the Judge of all things.

Osw. Dead!

Mar. I have borne my burthen to its destined end.

Osw. This instant we'll return to our Companions—

Oh how I long to see their faces again!

Enter IDONEA, with Pilgrims who continue their journey.

Idon. (after some time). What, Marmaduke!
now thou art mine for ever.

And Oswald, too! (*To MARMADUKE*). On will we
to my Father

With the glad tidings which this day hath brought;
We'll go together, and, such proof received
Of his own rights restored, his gratitude
To God above will make him feel for ours.

Osw. I interrupt you?

Idon. Think not so.

Mar. Idonea,
That I should ever live to see this moment!

Idon. Forgive me.—Oswald knows it all—he
knows,

Each word of that unhappy letter fell
As a blood drop from my heart.

Osw. 'Twas even so.

Mar. I have much to say, but for whose ear?—
not thine.

Idon. Ill can I bear that look—Plead for me,
Oswald!

You are my Father's Friend.

(*To MARMADUKE*). Alas, you know not,
And never *can* you know, how much he loved me.
Twice had he been to me a father, twice
Had given me breath, and was I not to be
His daughter, once his daughter? could I withstand
His pleading face, and feel his clasping arms,
And hear his prayer that I would not forsake him
In his old age— [Hides her face.]

Mar. Patience—Heaven grant me patience!—
She weeps, she weeps—*my* brain shall burn for hours
Ere I can shed a tear.

Idon. I was a woman;
And, balancing the hopes that are the dearest
To womankind with duty to my Father,
I yielded up those precious hopes, which nought
On earth could else have wrested from me;—if
erring,
Oh let me be forgiven!

Mar. I do forgive thee.

Idon. But take me to your arms—this breast,
alas!

It throbs, and you have a heart that does not feel it.

Mar. (exultingly). She is innocent.

[He embraces her.]

Osw. (aside). Were I a Moralist,

I should make wondrous revolution here;

It were a quaint experiment to show

The beauty of truth— [Addressing them.]

I see I interrupt you;

I shall have business with you, Marmaduke;

Follow me to the Hostel. [Exit OSWALD.]

Idon. Marmaduke,

This is a happy day. My Father soon

Shall sun himself before his native doors;

The lame, the hungry, will be welcome there.

No more shall he complain of wasted strength,

Of thoughts that fail, and a decaying heart;

His good works will be balm and life to him.

Mar. This is most strange!—I know not what
it was,

But there was something which most plainly said,
That thou wert innocent.

Idon. How innocent!—

Oh heavens! you've been deceived.

Mar. Thou art a Woman,

To bring perdition on the universe.

Idon. Already I've been punished to the height
Of my offence. [Smiling affectionately.]

I see you love me still,

The labours of my hand are still your joy;

Bethink you of the hour when on your shoulder

I hung this belt.

[Pointing to the belt on which was suspended
HERBERT'S scrip.]

Mar. Mercy of Heaven! [Sinks.]

Idon. What ails you! [Distractedly.]

Mar. The scrip that held his food, and I forgot
To give it back again!

Idon. What mean your words?

Mar. I know not what I said—all may be well.

Idon. That smile hath life in it!

Mar. This road is perilous;

I will attend you to a Hut that stands

Near the wood's edge—rest there to-night, I pray
you:

For me, I have business, as you heard, with Oswald,
But will return to you by break of day. [Exeunt.]

ACT IV.

SCENE, *A desolate prospect—a ridge of rocks—a Chapel on the summit of one—Moon behind the rocks—night stormy—irregular sound of a bell—HERBERT enters exhausted.*

Her. That Chapel-bell in mercy seemed to guide me,
But now it mocks my steps ; its fitful stroke
Can scarcely be the work of human hands.
Hear me, ye Men, upon the cliffs, if such
There be who pray nightly before the Altar.
Oh that I had but strength to reach the place !
My Child—my child—dark—dark—I faint—this
wind—
These stifling blasts—God help me !

Enter ELDRD.

Eld. Better this bare rock,
Though it were tottering over a man's head,
Than a tight case of dungeon walls for shelter
From such rough dealing.

[A moaning voice is heard.

Ha ! what sound is that ?

Trees creaking in the wind (but none are here)
Send forth such noises—and that weary bell !
Surely some evil Spirit abroad to-night
Is ringing it—'twould stop a Saint in prayer,
And that—what is it ? never was sound so like
A human groan. Ha ! what is here ? Poor Man—
Murdered ! alas ! speak—speak, I am your friend :
No answer—hush—lost wretch, he lifts his hand
And lays it to his heart—*(Kneels to him)*. I pray
you speak !

What has befallen you ?

Her. (feebly). A stranger has done this,
And in the arms of a stranger I must die.

Eld. Nay, think not so : come, let me raise
you up : *[Raises him.*

This is a dismal place—well—that is well—
I was too fearful—take me for your guide
And your support—my hut is not far off.

[Draws him gently off the stage.

SCENE, *a room in the Hostel—MARMADUKE and OSWALD.*

Mar. But for Idonea !—I have cause to think
That she is innocent.

Osw. Leave that thought awhile,
As one of those beliefs which in their hearts
Lovers lock up as pearls, though oft no better
Than feathers clinging to their points of passion.

This day's event has laid on me the duty
Of opening out my story ; you must hear it,
And without further preface.—In my youth,
Except for that abatement which is paid
By envy as a tribute to desert,
I was the pleasure of all hearts, the darling
Of every tongue—as you are now. You've heard
That I embarked for Syria. On our voyage
Was hatched among the crew a foul Conspiracy
Against my honour, in the which our Captain
Was, I believed, prime Agent. The wind fell ;
We lay becalmed week after week, until
The water of the vessel was exhausted ;
I felt a double fever in my veins,
Yet rage suppressed itself ;—to a deep stillness
Did my pride tame my pride ;—for many days,
On a dead sea under a burning sky,
I brooded o'er my injuries, deserted
By man and nature ;—if a breeze had blown,
It might have found its way into my heart,
And I had been—no matter—do you mark me ?

Mar. Quick—to the point—if any untold crime
Doth haunt your memory.

Osw. Patience, hear me further !—
One day in silence did we drift at noon
By a bare rock, narrow, and white, and bare ;
No food was there, no drink, no grass, no shade,
No tree, nor jutting eminence, nor form
Inanimate large as the body of man,
Nor any living thing whose lot of life
Might stretch beyond the measure of one moon.
To dig for water on the spot, the Captain
Landed with a small troop, myself being one :
There I reproached him with his treachery.
Imperious at all times, his temper rose ;
He struck me ; and that instant had I killed him,
And put an end to his insolence, but my Comrades
Rushed in between us : then did I insist
(All hated him, and I was stung to madness)
That we should leave him there, alive !—we did so.

Mar. And he was famished ?

Osw. Naked was the spot ;
Methinks I see it now—how in the sun
Its stony surface glittered like a shield ;
And in that miserable place we left him,
Alone but for a swarm of minute creatures
Not one of which could help him while alive,
Or mourn him dead.

Mar. A man by men cast off,
Left without burial ! nay, not dead nor dying,
But standing, walking, stretching forth his arms,
In all things like ourselves, but in the agony
With which he called for mercy ; and—even so—
He was forsaken ?

Osw.

There is a power in sounds :
The cries he uttered might have stopped the boat
That bore us through the water——

Mar.

You returned
Upon that dismal hearing—did you not ?

Osw. Some scoffed at him with hellish mockery,
And laughed so loud it seemed that the smooth sea
Did from some distant region echo us.

Mar. We all are of one blood, our veins are filled
At the same poisonous fountain !

Osw.

'Twas an island

Only by sufferance of the winds and waves,
Which with their foam could cover it at will.
I know not how he perished ; but the calm,
The same dead calm, continued many days.

Mar. But his own crime had brought on him
this doom,
His wickedness prepared it ; these expedients
Are terrible, yet ours is not the fault.

Osw. The man was famished, and was innocent !

Mar. Impossible !

Osw. The man had never wronged me.

Mar. Banish the thought, crush it, and be at
peace.

His guilt was marked—these things could never be
Were there not eyes that see, and for good ends,
Where ours are baffled.

Osw. I had been deceived.

Mar. And from that hour the miserable man
No more was heard of ?

Osw. I had been betrayed.

Mar. And he found no deliverance !

Osw. The Crew

Gave me a hearty welcome ; they had laid
The plot to rid themselves, at any cost,
Of a tyrannic Master whom they loathed.
So we pursued our voyage : when we landed,
The tale was spread abroad ; my power at once
Shrunk from me ; plans and schemes, and lofty
hopes—

All vanished. I gave way—do you attend ?

Mar. The Crew deceived you ?

Osw. Nay, command yourself.

Mar. It is a dismal night—how the wind howls !

Osw. I hid my head within a Convent, there
Lay passive as a dormouse in mid winter.
That was no life for me—I was o'erthrown,
But not destroyed.

Mar. The proofs—you ought to have seen
The guilt—have touched it—felt it at your heart—
As I have done.

Osw. A fresh tide of Crusaders
Drove by the place of my retreat : three nights
Did constant meditation dry my blood ;

Three sleepless nights I passed in sounding on,
Through words and things, a dim and perilous way ;
And, wheresoe'er I turned me, I beheld
A slavery compared to which the dungeon
And clanking chains are perfect liberty.
You understand me—I was comforted ;
I saw that every possible shape of action
Might lead to good—I saw it and burst forth
Thirsting for some of those exploits that fill
The earth for sure redemption of lost peace.

[Marking MARMADUKE'S countenance.]

Nay, you have had the worst. Ferocity
Subsided in a moment, like a wind
That drops down dead out of a sky it vexed.
And yet I had within me evermore
A salient spring of energy ; I mounted
From action up to action with a mind
That never rested—without meat or drink
Have I lived many days—my sleep was bound
To purposes of reason—not a dream
But had a continuity and substance
That waking life had never power to give.

Mar. O wretched Human-kind !—Until the
mystery

Of all this world is solved, well may we envy
The worm, that, underneath a stone whose weight
Would crush the lion's paw with mortal anguish,
Doth lodge, and feed, and coil, and sleep, in safety.
Fell not the wrath of Heaven upon those traitors ?

Osw. Give not to them a thought. From Palestine
We marched to Syria : oft I left the Camp,
When all that multitude of hearts was still,
And followed on, through woods of gloomy cedar,
Into deep chasms troubled by roaring streams ;
Or from the top of Lebanon surveyed
The moonlight desert, and the moonlight sea :
In these my lonely wanderings I perceived
What mighty objects do impress their forms
To elevate our intellectual being ;
And felt, if aught on earth deserves a curse,
'Tis that worst principle of ill which dooms
A thing so great to perish self-consumed.
—So much for my remorse !

Mar.

Unhappy Man !

Osw. When from these forms I turned to con-
template

The World's opinions and her usages,
I seemed a Being who had passed alone
Into a region of futurity,
Whose natural element was freedom——

Mar.

Stop—

I may not, cannot, follow thee.

Osw.

You must.

I had been nourished by the sickly food

Of popular applause. I now perceived
That we are praised, only as men in us
Do recognise some image of themselves,
An abject counterpart of what they are,
Or the empty thing that they would wish to be.
I felt that merit has no surer test
Than obloquy ; that, if we wish to serve
The world in substance, not deceive by show,
We must become obnoxious to its hate,
Or fear disguised in simulated scorn.
Mar. I pity, can forgive, you ; but those
wretches—

That monstrous perfidy !

Osw. Keep down your wrath.
False Shame discarded, spurious Fame despised,
Twin sisters both of Ignorance, I found
Life stretched before me smooth as some broad way
Cleared for a monarch's progress. Priests might spin
Their veil, but not for me—'twas in fit place
Among its kindred cobwebs. I had been,
And in that dream had left my native land,
One of Love's simple bondsmen—the soft chain
Was off for ever ; and the men, from whom
This liberation came, you would destroy :
Join me in thanks for their blind services.

Mar. 'Tis a strange aching that, when we would
curse
And cannot.—You have betrayed me—I have
done—

I am content—I know that he is guiltless—
That both are guiltless, without spot or stain,
Mutually consecrated. Poor old Man !
And I had heart for this, because thou lovedst
Her who from very infancy had been
Light to thy path, warmth to thy blood !—Together
[Turning to OSWALD.

We propped his steps, he leaned upon us both.

Osw. Ay, we are coupled by a chain of adamant ;
Let us be fellow-labourers, then, to enlarge
Man's intellectual empire. We subsist
In slavery ; all is slavery ; we receive
Laws, but we ask not whence those laws have come ;
We need an inward sting to goad us on.

Mar. Have you betrayed me ? Speak to that.

Osw. The mask,
Which for a season I have stooped to wear,
Must be cast off.—Know then that I was urged,
(For other impulse let it pass) was driven,
To seek for sympathy, because I saw
In you a mirror of my youthful self ;
I would have made us equal once again,
But that was a vain hope. You have struck home,
With a few drops of blood cut short the business ;
Therein for ever you must yield to me.

But what is done will save you from the blank
Of living without knowledge that you live :
Now you are suffering—for the future day,
'Tis his who will command it.—Think of my story—
Herbert is innocent.

Mar. (in a faint voice, and doubtingly) You do
but echo

My own wild words ?

Osw. Young Man, the seed must lie
Hid in the earth, or there can be no harvest ;
'Tis Nature's law. What I have done in darkness
I will avow before the face of day.
Herbert is innocent.

Mar. What fiend could prompt
This action ? Innocent !—oh, breaking heart !—
Alive or dead, I 'll find him. [Exit.

Osw. Alive—perdition ! [Exit.

SCENE, the inside of a poor Cottage.

ELEANOR and IDONEA seated.

Idon. The storm beats hard—Mercy for poor
or rich,

Whose heads are shelterless in such a night !

A Voice without. Holla ! to bed, good Folks,
within !

Elea. O save us !

Idon. What can this mean ?

Elea. Alas, for my poor husband !—
We 'll have a counting of our flocks to-morrow ;
The wolf keeps festival these stormy nights :
Be calm, sweet Lady, they are wassailers

[The voices die away in the distance.
Returning from their Feast—my heart beats so—
A noise at midnight does so frighten me.

Idon. Hush ! [Listening.

Elea. They are gone. On such a night, my
husband,

Dragged from his bed, was cast into a dungeon,
Where, hid from me, he counted many years,
A criminal in no one's eyes but theirs—
Not even in theirs—whose brutal violence
So dealt with him.

Idon. I have a noble Friend
First among youths of knightly breeding, One
Who lives but to protect the weak or injured.
There again ! [Listening.

Elea. 'Tis my husband's foot. Good Eldred
Has a kind heart ; but his imprisonment
Has made him fearful, and he 'll never be
The man he was.

Idon. I will retire ;—good night !

[She goes within.

Enter ELDRÉD, (hides a bundle).

Eld. Not yet in bed, Eleanor!—there are stains in that frock which must be washed out.

Elea. What has befallen you?

Eld. I am belated, and you must know the cause—*(speaking low)* that is the blood of an unhappy Man.

Elea. Oh! we are undone for ever.

Eld. Heaven forbid that I should lift my hand against any man. Eleanor, I have shed tears to-night, and it comforts me to think of it.

Elea. Where, where is he?

Eld. I have done him no harm, but—it will be forgiven me; it would not have been so once.

Elea. You have not *buried* anything? You are no richer than when you left me?

Eld. Be at peace; I am innocent.

Elea. Then God be thanked—

[A short pause; she falls upon his neck.]

Eld. To-night I met with an old Man lying stretched upon the ground—a sad spectacle: I raised him up with a hope that we might shelter and restore him.

Elea. *(as if ready to run)*. Where is he? You were not able to bring him *all* the way with you; let us return, I can help you.

[ELDRÉD shakes his head.]

Eld. He did not seem to wish for life: as I was struggling on, by the light of the moon I saw the stains of blood upon my clothes—he waved his hand, as if it were all useless; and I let him sink again to the ground.

Elea. Oh that I had been by your side!

Eld. I tell you his hands and his body were cold—how could I disturb his last moments? he strove to turn from me as if he wished to settle into sleep.

Elea. But, for the stains of blood—

Eld. He must have fallen, I fancy, for his head was cut; but I think his malady was cold and hunger.

Elea. Oh, Eldred, I shall never be able to look up at this roof in storm or fair but I shall tremble.

Eld. Is it not enough that my ill stars have kept me abroad to-night till this hour? I come home, and this is my comfort!

Elea. But did he say nothing which might have set you at ease?

Eld. I thought he grasped my hand while he was muttering something about his Child—his Daughter—*(starting as if he heard a noise)*. What is that?

Elea. Eldred, you are a father.

Eld. God knows what was in my heart, and will not curse my son for my sake.

Elea. But you prayed by him? you waited the hour of his release?

Eld. The night was wasting fast; I have no friend; I am spited by the world—his wound terrified me—if I had brought him along with me, and he had died in my arms!—I am sure I heard something breathing—and this chair!

Elea. Oh, Eldred, you will die alone. You will have nobody to close your eyes—no hand to grasp your dying hand—I shall be in my grave. A curse will attend us all.

Eld. Have you forgot your own troubles when I was in the dungeon?

Elea. And you left him alive?

Eld. Alive!—the damps of death were upon him—he could not have survived an hour.

Elea. In the cold, cold night.

Eld. *(in a savage tone)*. Ay, and his head was bare; I suppose you would have had me lend my bonnet to cover it.—You will never rest till I am brought to a felon's end.

Elea. Is there nothing to be done? cannot we go to the Convent?

Eld. Ay, and say at once that I murdered him!

Elea. Eldred, I know that ours is the only house upon the Waste; let us take heart; this Man may be rich; and could he be saved by our means, his gratitude may reward us.

Eld. 'Tis all in vain.

Elea. But let us make the attempt. This old Man may have a wife, and he may have children—let us return to the spot; we may restore him, and his eyes may yet open upon those that love him.

Eld. He will never open them more; even when he spoke to me, he kept them firmly sealed as if he had been blind.

Idon. *(rushing out)*. It is, it is, my Father—

Eld. We are betrayed *(looking at IDONEA)*.

Elea. His Daughter!—God have mercy! *(turning to IDONEA)*.

Idon. *(sinking down)*. Oh! lift me up and carry me to the place.

You are safe; the whole world shall not harm you.

Elea. This Lady is his Daughter.

Eld. *(moved)*. I'll lead you to the spot.

Idon. *(springing up)*. Alive!—you heard him breathe? quick, quick—

[Exeunt.]

ACT V.

SCENE, *A wood on the edge of the Waste.**Enter OSWALD and a Forester.*

For. He leaned upon the bridge that spans the glen,
And down into the bottom cast his eye,
That fastened there, as it would check the current.
Osw. He listened too; did you not say he listened?
For. As if there came such moaning from the
flood

As is heard often after stormy nights.

Osw. But did he utter nothing?

For. See him there!

MARMADUKE appearing.

Mar. Buzz, buzz, ye black and winged freebooters;
That is no substance which ye settle on!

For. His senses play him false; and see, his arms
Outspread, as if to save himself from falling!—
Some terrible phantom I believe is now
Passing before him, such as God will not
Permit to visit any but a man
Who has been guilty of some horrid crime.

[MARMADUKE disappears.]

Osw. The game is up!—

For. If it be needful, Sir,
I will assist you to lay hands upon him.

Osw. No, no, my Friend, you may pursue your
business—

'Tis a poor wretch of an unsettled mind,
Who has a trick of straying from his keepers;
We must be gentle. Leave him to my care.

[Exit Forester.]

If his own eyes play false with him, these freaks
Of fancy shall be quickly tamed by mine;
The goal is reached. My Master shall become
A shadow of myself—made by myself.

SCENE, *the edge of the Moor.**MARMADUKE and ELDRED enter from opposite sides.*

Mar. (*raising his eyes and perceiving ELDRED*).

In any corner of this savage Waste,
Have you, good Peasant, seen a blind old Man?

Eld. I heard—

Mar. You heard him, where? when
heard him?

Eld. As you know,

The first hours of last night were rough with storm:
I had been out in search of a stray heifer;
Returning late, I heard a moaning sound;
Then, thinking that my fancy had deceived me,
I hurried on, when straight a second moan,

A human voice distinct, struck on my ear.

So guided, distant a few steps, I found
An aged Man, and such as you describe.

Mar. You heard!—he called you to him? Of all
men

The best and kindest!—but where is he? guide me,
That I may see him.

Eld. On a ridge of rocks

A lonesome Chapel stands, deserted now:

The bell is left, which no one dares remove;
And, when the stormy wind blows o'er the peak,
It rings, as if a human hand were there
To pull the cord. I guess he must have heard it;
And it had led him towards the precipice,
To climb up to the spot whence the sound came;
But he had failed through weakness. From his
hand

His staff had dropped, and close upon the brink
Of a small pool of water he was laid,
As if he had stooped to drink, and so remained
Without the strength to rise.

Mar. Well, well, he lives,
And all is safe: what said he?

Eld. But few words:

He only spake to me of a dear Daughter,
Who, so he feared, would never see him more;
And of a Stranger to him, One by whom
He had been sore misused; but he forgave
The wrong and the wrong-doer. You are trou-
bled—

Perhaps you are his son?

Mar. The All-seeing knows,
I did not think he had a living Child.—
But whither did you carry him?

Eld. He was torn,
His head was bruised, and there was blood about
him—

Mar. That was no work of mine.

Eld. Nor was it mine.

Mar. But had he strength to walk? I could have
borne him

A thousand miles.

Eld. I am in poverty,

And know how busy are the tongues of men;
My heart was willing, Sir, but I am one
Whose good deeds will not stand by their own light;
And, though it smote me more than words can tell,
I left him.

Mar. I believe that there are phantoms,
That in the shape of man do cross our path
On evil instigation, to make sport
Of our distress—and thou art one of them!
But things substantial have so pressed on me—

Eld. My wife and children came into my mind.

Mar. Oh Monster ! Monster ! there are three
of us,
And we shall howl together.

[*After a pause and in a feeble voice.*

I am deserted

At my worst need, my crimes have in a net
(*Pointing to ELDRED*) Entangled this poor man.—
Where was it ? where ?

[*Dragging him along.*

Eld. 'Tis needless ; spare your violence. His
Daughter——

Mar. Ay, in the word a thousand scorpions lodge :
This old man *had* a Daughter.

Eld. To the spot

I hurried back with her.—O save me, Sir,
From such a journey !——there was a black tree,
A single tree ; she thought it was her Father.—
Oh Sir, I would not see that hour again
For twenty lives. The daylight dawned, and now—
Nay ; hear my tale, 'tis fit that you should hear it—
As we approached, a solitary crow
Rose from the spot ;—the Daughter clapped her
hands,

And then I heard a shriek so terrible

[*MARMADUKE shrinks back.*

The startled bird quivered upon the wing.

Mar. Dead, dead !—

Eld. (*after a pause*). A dismal matter, Sir, for me,
And seems the like for you ; if 'tis your wish,
I'll lead you to his Daughter ; but 'twere best
That she should be prepared ; I'll go before.

Mar. There will be need of preparation.

[*ELDRED goes off.*

Elea. (*enters*). Master !

Your limbs sink under you, shall I support you ?

Mar. (*taking her arm*). Woman, I've lent my
body to the service

Which now thou tak'st upon thee. God forbid
That thou shouldst ever meet a like occasion
With such a purpose in thine heart as mine was.

Elea. Oh, why have I to do with things like these ?

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE changes to the door of ELDRED'S cottage—
IDONEA seated—enter ELDRED.

Eld. Your Father, Lady, from a wilful hand
Has met unkindness ; so indeed he told me,
And you remember such was my report :
From what has just befallen me I have cause
To fear the very worst.

Idon. My Father is dead ;

Why dost thou come to me with words like these ?

Eld. A wicked Man should answer for his crimes.

Idon. Thou seest me what I am.

Eld. It was most heinous,
And doth call out for vengeance.

Idon. Do not add,
I prithee, to the harm thou 'st done already.

Eld. Hereafter you will thank me for this service.
Hard by, a Man I met, who, from plain proofs
Of interfering Heaven, I have no doubt,
Laid hands upon your Father. Fit it were
You should prepare to meet him.

Idon. I have nothing
To do with others ; help me to my Father—

[*She turns and sees MARMADUKE leaning on ELEANOR
—throws herself upon his neck, and after some
time,*

In joy I met thee, but a few hours past ;
And thus we meet again ; one human stay
Is left me still in thee. Nay, shake not so.

Mar. In such a wilderness—to see no thing,
No, not the pitying moon !

Idon. And perish so.

Mar. Without a dog to moan for him.

Idon. Think not of it,
But enter there and see him how he sleeps,
Tranquil as he had died in his own bed.

Mar. Tranquil—why not ?

Idon. Oh, peace !

Mar. He is at peace ;
His body is at rest : there was a plot,
A hideous plot, against the soul of man :
It took effect—and yet I baffled it,
In some degree.

Idon. Between us stood, I thought,
A cup of consolation, filled from Heaven
For both our needs ; must I, and in thy presence,
Alone partake of it ?—Beloved Marmaduke !

Mar. Give me a reason why the wisest thing
That the earth owns shall never choose to die,
But some one must be near to count his groans.
The wounded deer retires to solitude,
And dies in solitude : all things but man,
All die in solitude.

[*Moving towards the cottage door.*

Mysterious God,

If she had never lived I had not done it !—

Idon. Alas, the thought of such a cruel death
Has overwhelmed him.—I must follow.

Eld. Lady !

You will do well ; (*she goes*) unjust suspicion may
Cleave to this Stranger : if, upon his entering,
The dead Man heave a groan, or from his side
Uplift his hand—that would be evidence.

Elea. Shame ! Eldred, shame !

Mar. (*both returning*) The dead have but
one face. (*to himself*).

And such a Man—so meek and unoffending—
Helpless and harmless as a babe : a Man,
By obvious signal to the world's protection,
Solemnly dedicated—to decoy him !—

Idon. Oh, had you seen him living !—

Mar. I (so filled

With horror is this world) am unto thee
The thing most precious, that it now contains :
Therefore through me alone must be revealed
By whom thy Parent was destroyed, Idonea !
I have the proofs !—

Idon. O miserable Father !

Thou didst command me to bless all mankind ;
Nor to this moment, have I ever wished
Evil to any living thing ; but hear me,
Hear me, ye Heavens !—(*kneeling*)—may vengeance haunt the fiend

For this most cruel murder : let him live
And move in terror of the elements ;
The thunder send him on his knees to prayer
In the open streets, and let him think he sees,
If e'er he entereth the house of God,
The roof, self-moved, unsettling o'er his head ;
And let him, when he would lie down at night,
Point to his wife the blood-drops on his pillow !

Mar. My voice was silent, but my heart hath
joined thee.

Idon. (*leaning on MARMADUKE*). Left to the
mercy of that savage Man !
How could he call upon his Child !—O Friend !

[*Turns to MARMADUKE.*]

My faithful true and only Comforter.

Mar. Ay, come to me and weep. (*He kisses her.*)

(*To ELDRED*). Yes, Varlet, look,
The devils at such sights do clap their hands.

[*ELDRED retires alarmed.*]

Idon. Thy vest is torn, thy cheek is deadly pale ;
Hast thou pursued the monster ?

Mar. I have found him.—

Oh ! would that thou hadst perished in the flames !

Idon. Here art thou, then can I be desolate !—

Mar. There was a time, when this protecting hand
Availed against the mighty ; never more
Shall blessings wait upon a deed of mine.

Idon. Wild words for me to hear, for me, an
orphan,

Committed to thy guardianship by Heaven ;
And, if thou hast forgiven me, let me hope,
In this deep sorrow, trust, that I am thine
For closer care ;—here, is no malady.

[*Taking his arm.*]

Mar. There, is a malady—

(*Striking his heart and forehead*) And here, and
here,

A mortal malady.—I am accurst :

All nature curses me, and in my heart
Thy curse is fixed ; the truth must be laid bare.
It must be told, and borne. I am the man,
(Abused, betrayed, but how it matters not)
Presumptuous above all that ever breathed,
Who, casting as I thought a guilty Person
Upon Heaven's righteous judgment, did become
An instrument of Fiends. Through me, through me.
Thy Father perished.

Idon. Perished—by what mischance ?

Mar. Belovèd !—if I dared, so would I call thee—
Conflict must cease, and, in thy frozen heart,
The extremes of suffering meet in absolute peace.

[*He gives her a letter.*]

Idon. (*reads*) 'Be not surprised if you hear
that some signal judgment has befallen the man
who calls himself your father ; he is now with
me, as his signature will shew : abstain from con-
jecture till you see me.

'HERBERT.

'MARMADUKE.'

The writing Oswald's ; the signature my Father's :
(*Looks steadily at the paper*) And here is yours,—
or do my eyes deceive me ?

You have then seen my Father ?

Mar. He has leaned
Upon this arm.

Idon. You led him towards the Convent ?

Mar. That Convent was Stone-Arthur Castle.
Thither

We were his guides. I on that night resolved
That he should wait thy coming till the day
Of resurrection.

Idon. Miserable Woman,
Too quickly moved, too easily giving way,
I put denial on thy suit, and hence,
With the disastrous issue of last night,
Thy perturbation, and these frantic words.

Be calm, I pray thee !

Mar. Oswald—

Idon. Name him not.

[*Enter female Beggar.*]

Beg. And he is dead !—that Moor—how shall
I cross it ?

By night, by day, never shall I be able
To travel half a mile alone.—Good Lady !
Forgive me !—Saints forgive me. Had I thought
It would have come to this !—

Idon. What brings you hither ? speak !

Beg. (*pointing to MARMADUKE*). This innocent
Gentleman. Sweet heavens ! I told him
Such tales of your dead Father !—God is my judge,

I thought there was no harm : but that bad Man,
He bribed me with his gold, and looked so fierce.
Mercy ! I said I know not what—oh pity me—
I said, sweet Lady, you were not his Daughter—
Pity me, I am haunted ;—thrice this day
My conscience made me wish to be struck blind ;
And then I would have prayed, and had no voice.

Idon. (to MARMADUKE). Was it my Father ?—
no, no, no, for he

Was meek and patient, feeble, old and blind,
Helpless, and loved me dearer than his life.
—But hear me. For *one* question, I have a heart
That will sustain me. Did you murder him ?

Mar. No, not by stroke of arm. But learn the
process :

Proof after proof was pressed upon me ; guilt
Made evident, as seemed, by blacker guilt,
Whose impious folds enwrapped even thee ; and truth
And innocence, embodied in his looks,
His words and tones and gestures, did but serve
With me to aggravate his crimes, and heaped
Ruin upon the cause for which they pleaded.
Then pity crossed the path of my resolve :
Confounded, I looked up to Heaven, and cast,
Idonea ! thy blind Father, on the Ordeal
Of the bleak Waste—left him—and so he died !—

[*IDONEA sinks senseless ; Beggar, ELEANOR, &c.,
crowd round, and bear her off.*]

Why may we speak these things, and do no more ;
Why should a thrust of the arm have such a power,
And words that tell these things be heard in vain ?
She is not dead. Why !—if I loved this Woman,
I would take care she never woke again ;
But she *WILL* wake, and she will weep for me,
And say, no blame was mine—and so, poor fool,
Will waste her curses on another name.

[*He walks about distractedly.*]

Enter OSWALD.

OSWALD (*to himself*). Strong to o'return, strong
also to build up. [*To MARMADUKE.*]

The starts and sallies of our last encounter
Were natural enough ; but that, I trust,
Is all gone by. You have cast off the chains
That fettered your nobility of mind—
Delivered heart and head !

Let us to Palestine ;

This is a paltry field for enterprise.

Mar. Ay, what shall we encounter next ? This
issue—

'Twas nothing more than darkness deepening
darkness,

And weakness crowned with the impotence of
death !—

Your pupil is, you see, an apt proficient. (*ironically*).

Start not !—Here is another face hard by ;
Come, let us take a peep at both together,
And, with a voice at which the dead will quake,
Resound the praise of your morality—
Of this too much.

[*Drawing OSWALD towards the Cottage—stops short
at the door.*]

Men are there, millions, Oswald,
Who with bare hands would have plucked out thy
heart

And flung it to the dogs : but I am raised
Above, or sunk below, all further sense
Of provocation. Leave me, with the weight
Of that old Man's forgiveness on thy heart,
Pressing as heavily as it doth on mine.
Coward I have been ; know, there lies not now
Within the compass of a mortal thought,
A deed that I would shrink from ;—but to endure,
That is my destiny. May it be thine :
Thy office, thy ambition, be henceforth
To feed remorse, to welcome every sting
Of penitential anguish, yea with tears.
When seas and continents shall lie between us—
The wider space the better—we may find
In such a course fit links of sympathy,
An incommunicable rivalry
Maintained, for peaceful ends beyond our view.

[*Confused voices—several of the band enter—rush
upon OSWALD and seize him.*]

One of them. I would have dogged him to the
jaws of hell—

Osw. Ha ! is it so !—That vagrant Hag !—this
comes

Of having left a thing like her alive ! [*Aside.*]

Several voices. Despatch him !

Osw. If I pass beneath a rock
And shout, and, with the echo of my voice,
Bring down a heap of rubbish, and it crush me,
I die without dishonour. Famished, starved,
A Fool and Coward blended to my wish !

[*Smiles scornfully and exultingly at MARMADUKE.*]

Wal. 'Tis done ! (*stabs him.*)

Another of the band. The ruthless Traitor !

Mar. A rash deed !—

With that reproof I do resign a station
Of which I have been proud.

Wil. (approaching MARMADUKE). O my poor
Master !

Mar. Discerning Monitor, my faithful Wilfred,
Why art thou here ? [*Turning to WALLACE.*]

Wallace, upon these Borders,
Many there be whose eyes will not want cause
To weep that I am gone. Brothers in arms !
Raise on that dreary Waste a monument

That may record my story : nor let words—
 Few must they be, and delicate in their touch
 As light itself—be there withheld from Her
 Who, through most wicked arts, was made an
 orphan

By One who would have died a thousand times,
 To shield her from a moment's harm. To you,
 Wallace and Wilfred, I commend the Lady,
 By lowly nature reared, as if to make her
 In all things worthier of that noble birth,
 Whose long-suspended rights are now on the eve
 Of restoration : with your tenderest care
 Watch over her, I pray—sustain her——

Several of the band (eagerly). Captain !

Mar. No more of that ; in silence hear my doom :

A hermitage has furnished fit relief
 To some offenders ; other penitents,
 Less patient in their wretchedness, have fallen,
 Like the old Roman, on their own sword's point.
 They had their choice : a wanderer *must I* go,
 The Spectre of that innocent Man, my guide.
 No human ear shall ever hear me speak ;
 No human dwelling ever give me food,
 Or sleep, or rest : but, over waste and wild,
 In search of nothing, that this earth can give,
 But expiation, will I wander on—
 A Man by pain and thought compelled to live,
 Yet loathing life—till anger is appeased
 In Heaven, and Mercy gives me leave to die.

1795-6.

POEMS REFERRING TO THE PERIOD OF CHILDHOOD.

I.

My heart leaps up when I behold
 A rainbow in the sky :
 So was it when my life began ;
 So is it now I am a man ;
 So be it when I shall grow old,
 Or let me die !
 The Child is father of the Man ;
 And I could wish my days to be
 Bound each to each by natural piety.

1804.

II.

TO A BUTTERFLY.

STAY near me—do not take thy flight !
 A little longer stay in sight !
 Much converse do I find in thee,
 Historian of my infancy !
 Float near me ; do not yet depart !
 Dead times revive in thee :
 Thou bring'st, gay creature as thou art !
 A solemn image to my heart,
 My father's family !

Oh ! pleasant, pleasant were the days,
 The time, when, in our childish plays,
 My sister Emmeline and I
 Together chased the butterfly !
 A very hunter did I rush
 Upon the prey :—with leaps and springs
 I followed on from brake to bush ;
 But she, God love her ! feared to brush
 The dust from off its wings.

1801.

III.

THE SPARROW'S NEST.

BEHOLD, within the leafy shade,
 Those bright blue eggs together laid !
 On me the chance-discovered sight
 Gleamed like a vision of delight.
 I started—seeming to espy
 The home and sheltered bed,

The Sparrow's dwelling, which, hard by
 My Father's house, in wet or dry
 My sister Emmeline and I
 Together visited.

She looked at it and seemed to fear it ;
 Dreading, tho' wishing, to be near it .
 Such heart was in her, being then
 A little Prattler among men.
 The Blessing of my later years
 Was with me when a boy :
 She gave me eyes, she gave me ears ;
 And humble cares, and delicate fears ;
 A heart, the fountain of sweet tears ;
 And love, and thought, and joy.

1801.

IV.

FORESIGHT.

THAT is work of waste and ruin—
 Do as Charles and I are doing !
 Strawberry-blossoms, one and all,
 We must spare them—here are many :
 Look at it—the flower is small,
 Small and low, though fair as any :
 Do not touch it ! summers here
 I am older, Anne, than you.

Pull the primrose, sister Anne !
 Pull as many as you can.
 —Here are daisies, take your fill ;
 Pansies, and the cuckoo-flower :
 Of the lofty daffodil
 Make your bed, or make your bower ;
 Fill your lap, and fill your bosom ;
 Only spare the strawberry-blossom !

Primroses, the Spring may love them—
 Summer knows but little of them :
 Violets, a barren kind,
 Withered on the ground must lie ;
 Daisies leave no fruit behind
 When the pretty flowerets die ;
 Pluck them, and another year
 As many will be blowing here.

God has given a kindlier power
To the favoured strawberry-flower.
Hither soon as spring is fled
You and Charles and I will walk ;
Lurking berries, ripe and red,
Then will hang on every stalk,
Each within its leafy bower ;
And for that promise spare the flower !

1802.

V.

CHARACTERISTICS OF A CHILD THREE YEARS OLD.

LOVING she is, and tractable, though wild ;
And Innocence hath privilege in her
To dignify arch looks and laughing eyes ;
And feats of cunning ; and the pretty round
Of trespasses, affected to provoke
Mock-chastisement and partnership in play.
And, as a faggot sparkles on the hearth,
Not less if unattended and alone
Than when both young and old sit gathered round
And take delight in its activity ;
Even so this happy Creature of herself
Is all-sufficient ; solitude to her
Is blithe society, who fills the air
With gladness and involuntary songs.
Light are her sallies as the tripping fawn's
Forth-startled from the fern where shelay couched ;
Unthought-of, unexpected, as the stir
Of the soft breeze ruffling the meadow-flowers,
Or from before it chasing wantonly
The many-coloured images imprest
Upon the bosom of a placid lake.

1811.

VI.

ADDRESS TO A CHILD,

DURING A BOISTEROUS WINTER EVENING.

BY MY SISTER.

WHAT way does the Wind come ? What way does
he go ?
He rides over the water, and over the snow,
Through wood, and through vale ; and, o'er rocky
height
Which the goat cannot climb, takes his sounding
flight ;
He tosses about in every bare tree,
As, if you look up, you plainly may see ;

But how he will come, and whither he goes,
There 's never a scholar in England knows.

He will suddenly stop in a cunning nook,
And ring a sharp 'larum ;—but, if you should look,
There 's nothing to see but a cushion of snow
Round as a pillow, and whiter than milk,
And softer than if it were covered with silk.
Sometimes he 'll hide in the cave of a rock,
Then whistle as shrill as the buzzard cock ;
—Yet seek him,—and what shall you find in the
place ?

Nothing but silence and empty space ;
Save, in a corner, a heap of dry leaves,
That he's left, for a bed, to beggars or thieves !

As soon as 'tis daylight to-morrow, with me
You shall go to the orchard, and then you will see
That he has been there, and made a great rout,
And cracked the branches, and strewn them about ;
Heaven grant that he spare but that one upright
twig
That looked up at the sky so proud and big
All last summer, as well you know,
Studded with apples, a beautiful show !

Hark ! over the roof he makes a pause,
And growls as if he would fix his claws
Right in the slates, and with a huge rattle
Drive them down, like men in a battle :
—But let him range round ; he does us no harm,
We build up the fire, we 're snug and warm ;
Untouched by his breath see the candle shines bright,
And burns with a clear and steady light ;
Books have we to read,—but that half-stifled knell,
Alas ! 'tis the sound of the eight o'clock bell.
—Come now we 'll to bed ! and when we are there
He may work his own will, and what shall we care ?
He may knock at the door,—we 'll not let him in ;
May drive at the windows,—we 'll laugh at his din ;
Let him seek his own home wherever it be ;
Here 's a cozy warm house for Edward and me.

1806.

VII.

THE MOTHER'S RETURN.

BY THE SAME.

A MONTH, sweet Little-ones, is past
Since your dear Mother went away,—
And she to-morrow will return ;
To-morrow is the happy day.

O blessed tidings ! thought of joy !
 The eldest heard with steady glee ;
 Silent he stood ; then laughed amain,—
 And shouted, “ Mother, come to me ! ”

Louder and louder did he shout,
 With witless hope to bring her near ;
 “ Nay, patience ! patience, little boy !
 Your tender mother cannot hear.”

I told of hills, and far-off towns,
 And long, long vales to travel through ;—
 He listens, puzzled, sore perplexed,
 But he submits ; what can he do ?

No strife disturbs his sister’s breast ;
 She wars not with the mystery
 Of time and distance, night and day ;
 The bonds of our humanity.

Her joy is like an instinct, joy
 Of kitten, bird, or summer fly ;
 She dances, runs without an aim,
 She chatters in her ecstasy.

Her brother now takes up the note,
 And echoes back his sister’s glee ;
 They hug the infant in my arms,
 As if to force his sympathy.

Then, settling into fond discourse,
 We rested in the garden bower ;
 While sweetly shone the evening sun
 In his departing hour.

We told o’er all that we had done,—
 Our rambles by the swift brook’s side
 Far as the willow-skirted pool,
 Where two fair swans together glide.

We talked of change, of winter gone,
 Of green leaves on the hawthorn spray,
 Of birds that build their nests and sing
 And all “ since Mother went away ! ”

To her these tales they will repeat,
 To her our new-born tribes will show,
 The goslings green, the ass’s colt,
 The lambs that in the meadow go.

—But, see, the evening star comes forth !
 To bed the children must depart ;
 A moment’s heaviness they feel,
 A sadness at the heart :

’Tis gone—and in a merry fit
 They run up stairs in gamesome race ;
 I, too, infected by their mood,
 I could have joined the wanton chase.

Five minutes past—and, O the change !
 Asleep upon their beds they lie ;
 Their busy limbs in perfect rest,
 And closed the sparkling eye.

1807.

VIII.

ALICE FELL ;

OR, POVERTY.

THE post-boy drove with fierce career,
 For threatening clouds the moon had drowned ;
 When, as we hurried on, my ear
 Was smitten with a startling sound.

As if the wind blew many ways,
 I heard the sound,—and more and more ;
 It seemed to follow with the chaise,
 And still I heard it as before.

At length I to the boy called out ;
 He stopped his horses at the word,
 But neither cry, nor voice, nor shout,
 Nor aught else like it, could be heard.

The boy then smacked his whip, and fast
 The horses scampered through the rain ;
 But, hearing soon upon the blast
 The cry, I bade him halt again.

Forthwith alighting on the ground,
 “ Whence comes,” said I, “ this piteous moan ? ”
 And there a little Girl I found,
 Sitting behind the chaise, alone.

“ My cloak ! ” no other word she spake,
 But loud and bitterly she wept,
 As if her innocent heart would break ;
 And down from off her seat she leapt.

“ What ails you, child ? ”—she sobbed “ Look here ! ”
 I saw it in the wheel entangled,
 A weather-beaten rag as e’er
 From any garden scare-crow dangled.

There, twisted between nave and spoke,
 It hung, nor could at once be freed ;
 But our joint pains unloosed the cloak,
 A miserable rag indeed !

"And whither are you going, child,
To-night along these lonesome ways?"
"To Durham," answered she, half wild—
"Then come with me into the chaise."

Insensible to all relief
Sat the poor girl, and forth did send
Sob after sob, as if her grief
Could never, never have an end.

"My child, in Durham do you dwell?"
She checked herself in her distress,
And said, "My name is Alice Fell;
I'm fatherless and motherless.

And I to Durham, Sir, belong."
Again, as if the thought would choke
Her very heart, her grief grew strong;
And all was for her tattered cloak!

The chaise drove on; our journey's end
Was nigh; and, sitting by my side,
As if she had lost her only friend
She wept, nor would be pacified.

Up to the tavern-door we post;
Of Alice and her grief I told;
And I gave money to the host,
To buy a new cloak for the old.

"And let it be of duffil grey,
As warm a cloak as man can sell!"
Proud creature was she the next day,
The little orphan, Alice Fell!

1801.

IX.

LUCY GRAY;

OR, SOLITUDE.

Of I had heard of Lucy Gray;
And, when I crossed the wild,
I chanced to see at break of day
The solitary child.

No mate, no comrade Lucy knew;
She dwelt on a wide moor,
—The sweetest thing that ever grew
Beside a human door!

You yet may spy the fawn at play,
The hare upon the green;
But the sweet face of Lucy Gray
Will never more be seen.

"To-night will be a stormy night—
You to the town must go;
And take a lantern, Child, to light
Your mother through the snow."

"That, Father! will I gladly do:
'Tis scarcely afternoon—
The minster-clock has just struck two,
And yonder is the moon!"

At this the Father raised his hook,
And snapped a faggot-band;
He plied his work;—and Lucy took
The lantern in her hand.

Not blither is the mountain roe:
With many a wanton stroke
Her feet disperse the powdery snow,
That rises up like smoke.

The storm came on before its time:
She wandered up and down;
And many a hill did Lucy climb:
But never reached the town.

The wretched parents all that night
Went shouting far and wide;
But there was neither sound nor sight
To serve them for a guide.

At day-break on a hill they stood
That overlooked the moor;
And thence they saw the bridge of wood,
A furlong from their door.

They wept—and, turning homeward, cried,
"In heaven we all shall meet;"
—When in the snow the mother spied
The print of Lucy's feet.

Then downwards from the steep hill's edge
They tracked the footmarks small;
And through the broken hawthorn hedge,
And by the long stone-wall;

And then an open field they crossed:
The marks were still the same;
They tracked them on, nor ever lost;
And to the bridge they came.

They followed from the snowy bank
Those footmarks, one by one,
Into the middle of the plank ;
And further there were none !

—Yet some maintain that to this day
She is a living child ;
That you may see sweet Lucy Gray
Upon the lonesome wild.

O'er rough and smooth she trips along,
And never looks behind ;
And sings a solitary song
That whistles in the wind.

1799.

X.

WE ARE SEVEN.

—— A simple Child,
That lightly draws its breath,
And feels its life in every limb,
What should it know of death ?

I met a little cottage Girl :
She was eight years old, she said ;
Her hair was thick with many a curl
That clustered round her head.

She had a rustic, woodland air,
And she was wildly clad :
Her eyes were fair, and very fair ;
—Her beauty made me glad.

"Sisters and brothers, little Maid,
How many may you be ?"
"How many ? Seven in all," she said,
And wondering looked at me.

"And where are they ? I pray you tell."
She answered, "Seven are we ;
And two of us at Conway dwell,
And two are gone to sea.

Two of us in the church-yard lie,
My sister and my brother ;
And, in the church-yard cottage, I
Dwell near them with my mother."

"You say that two at Conway dwell,
And two are gone to sea,
Yet ye are seven !—I pray you tell,
Sweet Maid, how this may be."

Then did the little Maid reply,
"Seven boys and girls are we ;
Two of us in the church-yard lie,
Beneath the church-yard tree."

"You run about, my little Maid,
Your limbs they are alive ;
If two are in the church-yard laid,
Then ye are only five."

"Their graves are green, they may be seen,"
The little Maid replied,
"Twelve steps or more from my mother's door,
And they are side by side.

My stockings there I often knit,
My kerchief there I hem ;
And there upon the ground I sit,
And sing a song to them.

And often after sun-set, Sir,
When it is light and fair,
I take my little porringer,
And eat my supper there.

The first that died was sister Jane ;
In bed she moaning lay,
Till God released her of her pain ;
And then she went away.

So in the church-yard she was laid ;
And, when the grass was dry,
Together round her grave we played,
My brother John and I.

And when the ground was white with snow,
And I could run and slide,
My brother John was forced to go,
And he lies by her side."

"How many are you, then," said I,
"If they two are in heaven ?"
Quick was the little Maid's reply,
"O Master ! we are seven."

"But they are dead ; those two are dead !
Their spirits are in heaven !"
'Twas throwing words away ; for still
The little Maid would have her will,
And said, "Nay, we are seven !"

1798.

XI.

THE IDLE SHEPHERD-BOYS;

OR, DUNGEON-GHYLL FORCE*.

A PASTORAL.

THE valley rings with mirth and joy ;
 Among the hills the echoes play
 A never never ending song,
 To welcome in the May.
 The magpie chatters with delight ;
 The mountain raven's youngling brood
 Have left the mother and the nest ;
 And they go rambling east and west
 In search of their own food ;
 Or through the glittering vapours dart
 In very wantonness of heart.

Beneath a rock, upon the grass,
 Two boys are sitting in the sun ;
 Their work, if any work they have,
 Is out of mind—or done.
 On pipes of sycamore they play
 The fragments of a Christmas hymn ;
 Or with that plant which in our dale
 We call stag-horn, or fox's tail,
 Their rusty hats they trim :
 And thus, as happy as the day,
 Those Shepherds wear the time away.

Along the river's stony marge
 The sand-lark chants a joyous song ;
 The thrush is busy in the wood,
 And carols loud and strong.
 A thousand lambs are on the rocks,
 All newly born ! both earth and sky
 Keep jubilee, and more than all,
 Those boys with their green coronal ;
 They never hear the cry,
 That plaintive cry ! which up the hill
 Comes from the depth of Dungeon-Ghyll.

Said Walter, leaping from the ground,
 "Down to the stump of yon old yew
 We'll for our whistles run a race."
 —Away the shepherds flew ;
 They leapt—they ran—and when they came
 Right opposite to Dungeon-Ghyll,

Seeing that he should lose the prize,
 "Stop !" to his comrade Walter cries—
 James stopped with no good will :
 Said Walter then, exulting ; "Here
 You'll find a task for half a year.

Cross, if you dare, where I shall cross—
 Come on, and tread where I shall tread."
 The other took him at his word,
 And followed as he led.
 It was a spot which you may see
 If ever you to Langdale go ;
 Into a chasm a mighty block
 Hath fallen, and made a bridge of rock :
 The gulf is deep below ;
 And, in a basin black and small,
 Receives a lofty waterfall.

With staff in hand across the cleft
 The challenger pursued his march ;
 And now, all eyes and feet, hath gained
 The middle of the arch.
 When list ! he hears a piteous moan—
 Again !—his heart within him dies—
 His pulse is stopped, his breath is lost,
 He totters, pallid as a ghost,
 And, looking down, espies
 A lamb, that in the pool is pent
 Within that black and frightful rent.

The lamb had slipped into the stream,
 And safe without a bruise or wound
 The cataract had borne him down
 Into the gulf profound.
 His dam had seen him when he fell,
 She saw him down the torrent borne ;
 And, while with all a mother's love
 She from the lofty rocks above
 Sent forth a cry forlorn,
 The lamb, still swimming round and round,
 Made answer to that plaintive sound.

When he had learnt what thing it was,
 That sent this rueful cry ; I ween
 The Boy recovered heart, and told
 The sight which he had seen.
 Both gladly now deferred their task ;
 Nor was there wanting other aid—
 A Poet, one who loves the brooks
 Far better than the sages' books,
 By chance had thither strayed ;
 And there the helpless lamb he found
 By those huge rocks encompassed round.

* *Ghyll*, in the dialect of Cumberland and Westmoreland, is a short and, for the most part, a steep narrow valley, with a stream running through it. *Force* is the word universally employed in these dialects for waterfall.

He drew it from the troubled pool,
 And brought it forth into the light :
 The Shepherds met him with his charge,
 An unexpected sight !
 Into their arms the lamb they took,
 Whose life and limbs the flood had spared ;
 Then up the steep ascent they hied,
 And placed him at his mother's side ;
 And gently did the Bard
 Those idle Shepherd-boys upbraid,
 And bade them better mind their trade.

1800.

XII.

ANECDOTE FOR FATHERS,

'Retine vim istam, falsa enim dicam, si coges.'

EUSEBIUS.

I HAVE a boy of five years old ;
 His face is fair and fresh to see ;
 His limbs are cast in beauty's mould,
 And dearly he loves me.

One morn we strolled on our dry walk,
 Our quiet home all full in view,
 And held such intermitted talk
 As we are wont to do.

My thoughts on former pleasures ran ;
 I thought of Kilve's delightful shore,
 Our pleasant home when spring began,
 A long, long year before.

A day it was when I could bear
 Some fond regrets to entertain ;
 With so much happiness to spare,
 I could not feel a pain.

The green earth echoed to the feet
 Of lambs that bounded through the glade,
 From shade to sunshine, and as fleet
 From sunshine back to shade.

Birds warbled round me—and each trace
 Of inward sadness had its charm ;
 Kilve, thought I, was a favoured place,
 And so is Liswyn farm.

My boy beside me tripped, so slim
 And graceful in his rustic dress !
 And, as we talked, I questioned him,
 In very idleness.

"Now tell me, had you rather be,"
 I said, and took him by the arm,
 "On Kilve's smooth shore, by the green sea,
 Or here at Liswyn farm?"

In careless mood he looked at me,
 While still I held him by the arm,
 And said, "At Kilve I'd rather be
 Than here at Liswyn farm."

"Now, little Edward, say why so :
 My little Edward, tell me why."—
 "I cannot tell, I do not know."—
 "Why, this is strange," said I ;

"For, here are woods, hills smooth and warm :
 There surely must some reason be
 Why you would change sweet Liswyn farm
 For Kilve by the green sea."

At this, my boy hung down his head,
 He blushed with shame, nor made reply ;
 And three times to the child I said,
 "Why, Edward, tell me why?"

His head he raised—there was in sight,
 It caught his eye, he saw it plain—
 Upon the house-top, glittering bright,
 A broad and gilded vane.

Then did the boy his tongue unlock,
 And eased his mind with this reply :
 "At Kilve there was no weather-cock ;
 And that's the reason why."

O dearest, dearest boy ! my heart
 For better lore would seldom yearn,
 Could I but teach the hundredth part
 Of what from thee I learn.

1798.

XIII.

RURAL ARCHITECTURE.

THERE'S George Fisher, Charles Fleming, and
 Reginald Shore,
 Three rosy-cheeked school-boys, the highest not
 more
 Than the height of a counsellor's bag ;
 To the top of GREAT HOW * did it please them to
 climb :

* GREAT HOW is a single and conspicuous hill, which
 rises towards the foot of Thirlmere, on the western side of

And there they built up, without mortar or lime,
A Man on the peak of the crag.

They built him of stones gathered up as they lay :
They built him and christened him all in one day,
An urchin both vigorous and hale ;
And so without scruple they called him Ralph Jones.
Now Ralph is renowned for the length of his bones ;
The Magog of Legberthwaite dale.

Just half a week after, the wind sallied forth,
And, in anger or merriment, out of the north,
Coming on with a terrible pother,
From the peak of the crag blew the giant away.
And what did these school-boys ?—The very next
day
They went and they built up another.

—Some little I've seen of blind boisterous works
By Christian disturbers more savage than Turks,
Spirits busy to do and undo :
At remembrance whereof my blood sometimes will
flag ;
Then, light-hearted Boys, to the top of the crag ;
And I'll build up a giant with you.

1801.

XIV.

THE PET-LAMB.

A PASTORAL.

THE dew was falling fast, the stars began to blink ;
I heard a voice ; it said, "Drink, pretty creature,
drink !"

And, looking o'er the hedge, before me I espied
A snow-white mountain-lamb with a Maiden at its
side.

Nor sheep nor kine were near ; the lamb was all
alone,

And by a slender cord was tethered to a stone ;
With one knee on the grass did the little Maiden
kneel,

While to that mountain-lamb she gave its evening
meal.

The lamb, while from her hand he thus his supper
took,

Seemed to feast with head and ears ; and his tail
with pleasure shook.

the beautiful dale of Legberthwaite, along the high road
between Keswick and Ambleside.

"Drink, pretty creature, drink," she said in such
a tone

That I almost received her heart into my own.

'Twas little Barbara Lewthwaite, a child of beauty
rare !

I watched them with delight, they were a lovely pair.
Now with her empty can the maiden turned away :
But ere ten yards were gone her footsteps did she
stay.

Right towards the lamb she looked ; and from a
shady place

I unobserved could see the workings of her face :
If Nature to her tongue could measured numbers
bring,

Thus, thought I, to her lamb that little Maid might
sing :

"What ails thee, young One ? what ? Why pull
so at thy cord ?

Is it not well with thee ? well both for bed and board ?
Thy plot of grass is soft, and green as grass can be ;
Rest, little young One, rest ; what is't that aileth
thee ?

What is it thou wouldst seek ? What is wanting
to thy heart ?

Thy limbs are they not strong ? And beautiful
thou art :

This grass is tender grass ; these flowers they have
no peers ;

And that green corn all day is rustling in thy ears !

If the sun be shining hot, do but stretch thy woollen
chain,

This beech is standing by, its covert thou canst gain ;
For rain and mountain-storms ! the like thou
need'st not fear,

The rain and storm are things that scarcely can
come here.

Rest, little young One, rest ; thou hast forgot the day
When my father found thee first in places far away ;
Many flocks were on the hills, but thou wert owned
by none,

And thy mother from thy side for evermore was
gone.

He took thee in his arms, and in pity brought thee
home :

A blessed day for thee ! then whither wouldst
thou roam ?

A faithful nurse thou hast ; the dam that did thee
 yeon
 Upon the mountain tops no kinder could have been.

Thou know'st that twice a day I have brought thee
 in this can
 Fresh water from the brook, as clear as ever ran ;
 And twice in the day, when the ground is wet with
 dew,
 I bring thee draughts of milk, warm milk it is and
 new.

Thy limbs will shortly be twice as stout as they
 are now,
 Then I'll yoke thee to my cart like a pony in the
 plough ;
 My playmate thou shalt be ; and when the wind is
 cold
 Our hearth shall be thy bed, our house shall be
 thy fold.

It will not, will not rest !—Poor creature, can it be
 That 'tis thy mother's heart which is working so
 in thee ?
 Things that I know not of belike to thee are dear,
 And dreams of things which thou canst neither see
 nor hear.

Alas, the mountain-tops that look so green and fair !
 I've heard of fearful winds and darkness that come
 there ;
 The little brooks that seem all pastime and all play,
 When they are angry, roar like lions for their prey.

Here thou need'st not dread the raven in the sky ;
 Night and day thou art safe,—our cottage is hard by.
 Why bleat so after me ? Why pull so at thy chain ?
 Sleep—and at break of day I will come to thee
 again !”

—As homeward through the lane I went with lazy
 feet,

This song to myself did I oftentimes repeat ;
 And it seemed, as I retraced the ballad line by line,
 That but half of it was hers, and one half of it was
mine.

Again, and once again, did I repeat the song ;
 “Nay,” said I, “more than half to the damsel
 must belong,
 For she looked with such a look, and she spake
 with such a tone,
 That I almost received her heart into my own.”

1800.

XV.

TO H. C.

SIX YEARS OLD.

O THOU ! whose fancies from afar are brought ;
 Who of thy words dost make a mock apparel,
 And fittest to unutterable thought
 The breeze-like motion and the self-born carol ;
 Thou faery voyager ! that dost float
 In such clear water, that thy boat
 May rather seem
 To brood on air than on an earthly stream ;
 Suspended in a stream as clear as sky,
 Where earth and heaven do make one imagery ;
 O blessed vision ! happy child !
 Thou art so exquisitely wild,
 I think of thee with many fears
 For what may be thy lot in future years.

I thought of times when Pain might be thy guest,
 Lord of thy house and hospitality ;
 And Grief, uneasy lover ! never rest
 But when she sate within the touch of thee.
 O too industrious folly !
 O vain and causeless melancholy !
 Nature will either end thee quite ;
 Or, lengthening out thy season of delight,
 Preserve for thee, by individual right,
 A young lamb's heart among the full-grown flocks.
 What hast thou to do with sorrow,
 Or the injuries of to-morrow ?
 Thou art a dew-drop, which the morn brings forth,
 Ill fitted to sustain unkindly shocks,
 Or to be trailed along the soiling earth ;
 A gem that glitters while it lives,
 And no forewarning gives ;
 But, at the touch of wrong, without a strife
 Slips in a moment out of life.

1802.

XVI.

INFLUENCE OF NATURAL OBJECTS

IN CALLING FORTH AND STRENGTHENING THE IMAGINATION
 IN BOYHOOD AND EARLY YOUTH.

FROM AN UNPUBLISHED POEM.

[This extract is reprinted from “THE FRIEND.”]

WISDOM and Spirit of the universe !
 Thou Soul, that art the Eternity of thought !
 And giv'st to forms and images a breath
 And everlasting motion ! not in vain,
 By day or star-light, thus from my first dawn

Of childhood didst thou intertwine for me
 The passions that build up our human soul;
 Not with the mean and vulgar works of Man;
 But with high objects, with enduring things,
 With life and nature; purifying thus
 The elements of feeling and of thought,
 And sanctifying by such discipline
 Both pain and fear,—until we recognise
 A grandeur in the beatings of the heart.

Nor was this fellowship vouchsafed to me
 With stinted kindness. In November days,
 When vapours rolling down the valleys made
 A lonely scene more lonesome; among woods
 At noon; and mid the calm of summer nights,
 When, by the margin of the trembling lake,
 Beneath the gloomy hills, homeward I went
 In solitude, such intercourse was mine:
 Mine was it in the fields both day and night,
 And by the waters, all the summer long.
 And in the frosty season, when the sun
 Was set, and, visible for many a mile,
 The cottage-windows through the twilight blazed,
 I heeded not the summons: happy time
 It was indeed for all of us; for me
 It was a time of rapture! Clear and loud
 The village-clock tolled six—I wheeled about,
 Proud and exulting like an untired horse
 That cares not for his home.—All shod with steel
 We hissed along the polished ice, in games
 Confederate, imitative of the chase
 And woodland pleasures,—the resounding horn,
 The pack loud-chiming, and the hunted hare.
 So through the darkness and the cold we flew,
 And not a voice was idle: with the din
 Smitten, the precipices rang aloud;
 The leafless trees and every icy crag
 Tinkled like iron; while far-distant hills
 Into the tumult sent an alien sound
 Of melancholy, not unnoticed while the stars,
 Eastward, were sparkling clear, and in the west
 The orange sky of evening died away.

Not seldom from the uproar I retired
 Into a silent bay, or sportively
 Glanced sideway, leaving the tumultuous throng,
 To cut across the reflex of a star;
 Image, that, flying still before me, gleamed
 Upon the glassy plain: and oftentimes,
 When we had given our bodies to the wind,
 And all the shadowy banks on either side
 Came sweeping through the darkness, spinning still
 The rapid line of motion, then at once
 Have I, reclining back upon my heels,

Stopped short; yet still the solitary cliffs
 Wheeled by me—even as if the earth had rolled
 With visible motion her diurnal round!
 Behind me did they stretch in solemn train,
 Feebler and feebler, and I stood and watched
 Till all was tranquil as a summer sea.

1799.

XVII.

THE LONGEST DAY.

ADDRESSED TO MY DAUGHTER.

LET us quit the leafy arbour,
 And the torrent murmuring by;
 For the sun is in his harbour,
 Weary of the open sky.

Evening now unbinds the fetters
 Fashioned by the glowing light;
 All that breathe are thankful debtors
 To the harbinger of night.

Yet by some grave thoughts attended
 Eve renews her calm career;
 For the day that now is ended,
 Is the longest of the year.

Dora! sport, as now thou sportest,
 On this platform, light and free;
 Take thy bliss, while longest, shortest,
 Are indifferent to thee!

Who would check the happy feeling
 That inspires the linnet's song?
 Who would stop the swallow, wheeling
 On her pinions swift and strong?

Yet at this impressive season,
 Words which tenderness can speak
 From the truths of homely reason,
 Might exalt the loveliest cheek;

And, while shades to shades succeeding
 Steal the landscape from the sight,
 I would urge this moral pleading,
 Last forerunner of "Good night!"

SUMMER ebbs;—each day that follows
 Is a reflux from on high,
 Tending to the darksome hollows
 Where the frosts of winter lie.

He who governs the creation,
In his providence, assigned
Such a gradual declination
To the life of human kind.

Yet we mark it not;—fruits redden,
Fresh flowers blow, as flowers have blown,
And the heart is loth to deaden
Hopes that she so long hath known.

Be thou wiser, youthful Maiden !
And when thy decline shall come,
Let not flowers, or boughs fruit-laden,
Hide the knowledge of thy doom.

Now, even now, ere wrapped in slumber,
Fix thine eyes upon the sea
That absorbs time, space, and number ;
Look thou to Eternity !

Follow thou the flowing river
On whose breast are thither borne
All deceived, and each deceiver,
Through the gates of night and morn ;

Through the year's successive portals ;
Through the bounds which many a star
Marks, not mindless of frail mortals,
When his light returns from far.

Thus when thou with Time hast travelled
Toward the mighty gulf of things,
And the mazy stream untravelled
With thy best imaginings ;

Think, if thou on beauty leanest,
Think how pitiful that stay,
Did not virtue give the meanest
Charms superior to decay.

Duty, like a strict preceptor,
Sometimes frowns, or seems to frown ;
Choose her thistle for thy sceptre,
While youth's roses are thy crown.

Grasp it,—if thou shrink and tremble,
Fairest damsel of the green,
Thou wilt lack the only symbol
That proclaims a genuine queen ;

And ensures those palms of honour
Which selected spirits wear,
Bending low before the Donor,
Lord of heaven's unchanging year !

XVIII.

THE NORMAN BOY.

HIGH on a broad unfertile tract of forest-skirted
Down,
Nor kept by Nature for herself, nor made by man
his own,
From home and company remote and every playful
joy,
Served, tending a few sheep and goats, a ragged
Norman Boy.

Him never saw I, nor the spot; but from an English
Dame,
Stranger to me and yet my friend, a simple notice
came,
With suit that I would speak in verse of that seques-
tered child
Whom, one bleak winter's day, she met upon the
dreary Wild.

His flock, along the woodland's edge with relics
sprinkled o'er
Of last night's snow, beneath a sky threatening the
fall of more,
Where tufts of herbage tempted each, were busy at
their feed,
And the poor Boy was busier still, with work of
anxious heed.

There *was* he, where of branches rent and withered
and decayed,
For covert from the keen north wind, his hands a
hut had made.
A tiny tenement, forsooth, and frail, as needs must be
A thing of such materials framed, by a builder
such as he.

The hut stood finished by his pains, nor seemingly
lacked aught
That skill or means of his could add, but the
architect had wrought
Some limber twigs into a Cross, well-shaped with
fingers nice,
To be engrafted on the top of his small edifice.

That Cross he now was fastening there, as the surest
power and best
For supplying all deficiencies, all wants of the rude
nest
In which, from burning heat, or tempest driving
far and wide,
The innocent Boy, else shelterless, his lonely head
must hide.

That Cross belike he also raised as a standard for
the true
And faithful service of his heart in the worst that
might ensue
Of hardship and distressful fear, amid the houseless
waste
Where he, in his poor self so weak, by Providence
was placed.

—Here, Lady ! might I cease ; but nay, let *us*
before we part
With this dear holy shepherd-boy breathe a prayer
of earnest heart,
That unto him, where'er shall lie his life's appointed
way,
The Cross, fixed in his soul, may prove an all-
sufficing stay.

XIX.

THE POET'S DREAM,

SEQUEL TO THE NORMAN BOY.

Just as those final words were penned, the sun
broke out in power,
And gladdened all things ; but, as chanced, within
that very hour,
Air blackened, thunder growled, fire flashed from
clouds that hid the sky,
And, for the Subject of my Verse, I heaved a
pensive sigh.

Nor could my heart by second thoughts from
heaviness be cleared,
For bodied forth before my eyes the cross-crowned
but appeared ;
And, while around it storm as fierce seemed trou-
bling earth and air,
I saw, within, the Norman Boy kneeling alone in
prayer.

The Child, as if the thunder's voice spake with
articulate call,
Bowed meekly in submissive fear, before the Lord
of All ;
His lips were moving ; and his eyes, upraised to
sue for grace,
With soft illumination cheered the dimness of that
place.

How beautiful is holiness !—what wonder if the sight,
Almost as vivid as a dream, produced a dream at
night ?

It came with sleep and showed the Boy, no cherub,
not transformed,
But the poor ragged Thing whose ways my human
heart had warmed.

Me had the dream equipped with wings, so I took
him in my arms,
And lifted from the grassy floor, stilling his faint
alarms,
And bore him high through yielding air my debt
of love to pay,
By giving him, for both our sakes, an hour of
holiday.

I whispered, " Yet a little while, dear Child ! thou
art my own,
To show thee some delightful thing, in country or
in town.
What shall it be ? a mirthful throng ? or that holy
place and calm
St. Denis, filled with royal tombs, or the Church of
Notre Dame ?

" St. Ouen's golden Shrine ? Or choose what else
would please thee most
Of any wonder Normandy, or all proud France,
can boast !"
" My Mother," said the Boy, " was born near to a
blessed Tree,
The Chapel Oak of Allonville ; good Angel, show
it me !"

On wings, from broad and stedfast poise let loose
by this reply,
For Allonville, o'er down and dale, away then did
we fly ;
O'er town and tower we flew, and fields in May's
fresh verdure drest ;
The wings they did not flag ; the Child, though
grave, was not deprest.

But who shall show, to waking sense, the gleam of
light that broke
Forth from his eyes, when first the Boy looked
down on that huge oak,
For length of days so much revered, so famous
where it stands
For twofold hallowing—Nature's care, and work
of human hands ?

Strong as an Eagle with my charge I glided round
and round
The wide-spread boughs, for view of door, window,
and stair that wound

Gracefully up the gnarled trunk ; nor left we
unsurveyed
The pointed steeple peering forth from the centre
of the shade.

I lighted—opened with soft touch the chapel's iron
door,
Past softly, leading in the Boy ; and, while from
roof to floor
From floor to roof all round his eyes the Child
with wonder cast,
Pleasure on pleasure crowded in, each livelier than
the last.

For, deftly framed within the trunk, the sanctuary
showed,
By light of lamp and precious stones, that glimmered
here, there glowed,
Shrine, Altar, Image, Offerings hung in sign of
gratitude ;
Sight that inspired accordant thoughts ; and speech
I thus renewed :

“ Hither the Afflicted come, as thou hast heard
thy Mother say,
And, kneeling, supplication make to our Lady de
la Paix ;
What mournful sighs have here been heard, and,
when the voice was stopt
By sudden pangs ; what bitter tears have on this
pavement dropt !

“ Poor Shepherd of the naked Down, a favoured
lot is thine,
Far happier lot, dear Boy, than brings full many
to this shrine ;
From body pains and pains of soul thou needest no
release,
Thy hours as they flow on are spent, if not in joy,
in peace.

“ Then offer up thy heart to God in thankfulness
and praise,
Give to Him prayers, and many thoughts, in thy
most busy days ;
And in His sight the fragile Cross, on thy small
hut, will be
Holy as that which long hath crowned the Chapel
of this Tree ;

“ Holy as that far seen which crowns the sumptuous
Church in Rome
Where thousands meet to worship God under a
mighty Dome ;

He sees the bending multitude, he hears the choral
rites,
Yet not the less, in children's hymns and lonely
prayer, delights.

“ God for his service needeth not proud work of
human skill ;
They please him best who labour most to do in
peace his will :
So let us strive to live, and to our Spirits will be
given
Such wings as, when our Saviour calls, shall bear
us up to heaven.”

The Boy no answer made by words, but, so earnest
was his look,
Sleep fled, and with it fled the dream—recorded in
this book,
Lest all that passed should melt away in silence
from my mind,
As visions still more bright have done, and left no
trace behind.

But oh ! that Country-man of thine, whose eye,
loved Child, can see
A pledge of endless bliss in acts of early piety,
In verse, which to thy ear might come, would treat
this simple theme,
Nor leave untold our happy flight in that
adventurous dream.

Alas the dream, to thee, poor Boy ! to thee from
whom it flowed,
Was nothing, scarcely can be aught, yet 'twas
bounteously bestowed,
If I may dare to cherish hope that gentle eyes will
read
Not loth, and listening Little-ones, heart-touched,
their fancies feed.*

XX.

THE WESTMORELAND GIRL.

TO MY GRANDCHILDREN.

PART I.

SEEK who will delight in fable
I shall tell you truth. A Lamb
Leapt from this steep bank to follow
'Cross the brook its thoughtless dam.

* See note.

Far and wide on hill and valley
Rain had fallen, unceasing rain,
And the bleating mother's Young-one
Struggled with the flood in vain :

But, as chanced, a Cottage-maiden
(Ten years scarcely had she told)
Seeing, plunged into the torrent,
Clasped the Lamb and kept her hold.

Whirled adown the rocky channel,
Sinking, rising, on they go,
Peace and rest, as seems, before them
Only in the lake below.

Oh ! it was a frightful current
Whose fierce wrath the Girl had braved ;
Clap your hands with joy my Hearers,
Shout in triumph, both are saved ;

Saved by courage that with danger
Grew, by strength the gift of love,
And belike a guardian angel
Came with succour from above.

—◆—
PART II.

Now, to a maturer Audience,
Let me speak of this brave Child
Left among her native mountains
With wild Nature to run wild.

So, unwatched by love maternal,
Mother's care no more her guide,
Fared this little bright-eyed Orphan
Even while at her father's side.

Spare your blame,—remembrance makes him
Loth to rule by strict command ;
Still upon his cheek are living
Touches of her infant hand,

Dear caresses given in pity,
Sympathy that soothed his grief,
As the dying mother witnessed
To her thankful mind's relief.

Time passed on ; the Child was happy,
Like a Spirit of air she moved,
Wayward, yet by all who knew her
For her tender heart beloved.

Scarcely less than sacred passions,
Bred in house, in grove, and field,
Link her with the inferior creatures,
Urge her powers their rights to shield.

Anglers, bent on reckless pastime,
Learn how she can feel alike
Both for tiny harmless minnow
And the fierce and sharp-toothed pike.

Merciful protectress, kindling
Into anger or disdain ;
Many a captive hath she rescued,
Others saved from lingering pain.

Listen yet awhile;—with patience
Hear the homely truths I tell,
She in Grasmere's old church-steeple
Tolled this day the passing-bell.

Yes, the wild Girl of the mountains
To their echoes gave the sound,
Notice punctual as the minute,
Warning solemn and profound.

She, fulfilling her sire's office,
Rang alone the far-heard knell,
Tribute, by her hand, in sorrow,
Paid to One who loved her well.

When his spirit was departed
On that service she went forth ;
Nor will fail the like to render
When his corse is laid in earth.

What then wants the Child to temper,
In her breast, unruly fire,
To control the froward impulse
And restrain the vague desire ?

Easily a pious training
And a stedfast outward power
Would supplant the weeds and cherish,
In their stead, each opening flower.

Thus the fearless Lamb-deliv'rer,
Woman-grown, meek-hearted, sage,
May become a blest example
For her sex, of every age.

Watchful as a wheeling eagle,
Constant as a soaring lark,
Should the country need a heroine,
She might prove our Maid of Arc.

Leave that thought ; and here be uttered
Prayer that Grace divine may raise
Her humane courageous spirit
Up to heaven, thro' peaceful ways.

POEMS FOUNDED ON THE AFFECTIONS.

1.

THE BROTHERS.

"THESE Tourists, heaven preserve us! needs must live

A profitable life: some glance along,
Rapid and gay, as if the earth were air,
And they were butterflies to wheel about
Long as the summer lasted: some, as wise,
Perched on the forehead of a jutting crag,
Pencil in hand and book upon the knee,
Will look and scribble, scribble on and look,
Until a man might travel twelve stout miles,
Or reap an acre of his neighbour's corn.
But, for that moping Son of Idleness,
Why can he tarry *yonder*?—In our church-yard
Is neither epitaph nor monument,
Tombstone nor name—only the turf we tread
And a few natural graves."

To Jane, his wife,

Thus spake the homely Priest of Ennerdale.
It was a July evening; and he sate
Upon the long stone-seat beneath the eaves
Of his old cottage,—as it chanced, that day,
Employed in winter's work. Upon the stone
His wife sate near him, teasing matted wool,
While, from the twin cards toothed with glittering
wire,

He fed the spindle of his youngest child,
Who, in the open air, with due accord
Of busy hands and back-and-forward steps,
Her large round wheel was turning. Towards the field
In which the Parish Chapel stood alone,
Girt round with a bare ring of mossy wall,
While half an hour went by, the Priest had sent
Many a long look of wonder: and at last,
Risen from his seat, beside the snow-white ridge
Of carded wool which the old man had piled
He laid his implements with gentle care,
Each in the other locked; and, down the path
That from his cottage to the church-yard led,
He took his way, impatient to accost
The Stranger, whom he saw still lingering there.

'Twas one well known to him in former days,
A Shepherd-lad; who ere his sixteenth year

Had left that calling, tempted to entrust
His expectations to the fickle winds
And perilous waters; with the mariners
A fellow-mariner;—and so had fared
Through twenty seasons; but he had been reared
Among the mountains, and he in his heart
Was half a shepherd on the stormy seas.
Oft in the piping shrouds had Leonard heard
The tones of waterfalls, and inland sounds
Of caves and trees:—and, when the regular wind
Between the tropics filled the steady sail,
And bléw with the same breath through days and
weeks,

Lengthening invisibly its weary line
Along the cloudless Main, he, in those hours
Of tiresome indolence, would often hang
Over the vessel's side, and gaze and gaze;
And, while the broad blue wave and sparkling foam
Flashed round him images and hues that wrought
In union with the employment of his heart,
He, thus by feverish passion overcome,
Even with the organs of his bodily eye,
Below him, in the bosom of the deep,
Saw mountains; saw the forms of sheep that grazed
On verdant hills—with dwellings among trees,
And shepherds clad in the same country grey
Which he himself had worn*.

And now, at last,

From perils manifold, with some small wealth
Acquired by traffic 'mid the Indian Isles,
To his paternal home he is returned,
With a determined purpose to resume
The life he had lived there; both for the sake
Of many darling pleasures, and the love
Which to an only brother he has borne
In all his hardships, since that happy time
When, whether it blew foul or fair, they two
Were brother-shepherds on their native hills.
—They were the last of all their race: and now,
When Leonard had approached his home, his heart
Failed in him; and, not venturing to enquire
Tidings of one so long and dearly loved,

* This description of the Calenture is sketched from an imperfect recollection of an admirable one in prose, by Mr. Gilbert, author of the Hurricane.

He to the solitary church-yard turned;
That, as he knew in what particular spot
His family were laid, he thence might learn
If still his Brother lived, or to the file
Another grave was added.—He had found
Another grave,—near which a full half-hour
He had remained; but, as he gazed, there grew
Such a confusion in his memory,
That he began to doubt; and even to hope
That he had seen this heap of turf before,—
That it was not another grave; but one
He had forgotten. He had lost his path,
As up the vale, that afternoon, he walked
Through fields which once had been well known to
him:

And oh what joy this recollection now
Sent to his heart! he lifted up his eyes,
And, looking round, imagined that he saw
Strange alteration wrought on every side
Among the woods and fields, and that the rocks,
And everlasting hills themselves were changed.

By this the Priest, who down the field had come,
Unseen by Leonard, at the church-yard gate
Stopped short,—and thence, at leisure, limb by limb
Perused him with a gay complacency.
Ay, thought the Vicar, smiling to himself,
'Tis one of those who needs must leave the path
Of the world's business to go wild alone:
His arms have a perpetual holiday;
The happy man will creep about the fields,
Following his fancies by the hour, to bring
Tears down his cheek, or solitary smiles
Into his face, until the setting sun
Write fool upon his forehead.—Planted thus
Beneath a shed that over-arched the gate
Of this rude church-yard, till the stars appeared
The good Man might have communed with himself,
But that the Stranger, who had left the grave,
Approached; he recognised the Priest at once,
And, after greetings interchanged, and given
By Leonard to the Vicar as to one
Unknown to him, this dialogue ensued.

Leonard. You live, Sir, in these dales, a quiet
life:

Your years make up one peaceful family;
And who would grieve and fret, if, welcome come
And welcome gone, they are so like each other,
They cannot be remembered? Scarce a funeral
Comes to this church-yard once in eighteen months;
And yet, some changes must take place among you:
And you, who dwell here, even among these rocks,
Can trace the finger of mortality,
And see, that with our threescore years and ten

We are not all that perish.—I remember,
(For many years ago I passed this road)
There was a foot-way all along the fields
By the brook-side—'tis gone—and that dark cleft!
To me it does not seem to wear the face
Which then it had!

Priest. Nay, Sir, for aught I know,
That chasm is much the same—

Leonard. But, surely, yonder—

Priest. Ay, there, indeed, your memory is a friend
That does not play you false.—On that tall pike
(It is the loneliest place of all these hills)
There were two springs which bubbled side by
side,

As if they had been made that they might be
Companions for each other: the huge crag
Was rent with lightning—one hath disappeared;
The other, left behind, is flowing still.
For accidents and changes such as these,
We want not store of them;—a water-spout
Will bring down half a mountain; what a feast
For folks that wander up and down like you,
To see an acre's breadth of that wide cliff
One roaring cataract! a sharp May-storm
Will come with loads of January snow,
And in one night send twenty score of sheep
To feed the ravens; or a shepherd dies
By some untoward death among the rocks:
The ice breaks up and sweeps away a bridge;
A wood is felled:—and then for our own homes!
A child is born or christened, a field ploughed,
A daughter sent to service, a web spun,
The old house-clock is decked with a new face;
And hence, so far from wanting facts or dates
To chronicle the time, we all have here
A pair of diaries,—one serving, Sir,
For the whole dale, and one for each fire-side—
Yours was a stranger's judgment: for historians,
Commend me to these valleys!

Leonard. Yet your Church-yard
Seems, if such freedom may be used with you,
To say that you are heedless of the past:
An orphan could not find his mother's grave:
Here's neither head nor foot-stone, plate of brass,
Cross-bones nor skull,—type of our earthly state
Nor emblem of our hopes: the dead man's home
Is but a fellow to that pasture-field.

Priest. Why, there, Sir, is a thought that's new
to me!

The stone-cutters, 'tis true, might beg their bread
If every English church-yard were like ours;
Yet your conclusion wanders from the truth:
We have no need of names and epitaphs;
We talk about the dead by our fire-sides.

And then, for our immortal part ! *we* want
No symbols, Sir, to tell us that plain tale :
The thought of death sits easy on the man
Who has been born and dies among the mountains.

Leonard. Your Dalesmen, then, do in each other's
thoughts

Possess a kind of second life : no doubt
You, Sir, could help me to the history
Of half these graves !

Priest. For eight-score winters past,
With what I've witnessed, and with what I've
heard,

Perhaps I might ; and, on a winter-evening,
If you were seated at my chimney's nook,
By turning o'er these hillocks one by one,
We two could travel, Sir, through a strange round ;
Yet all in the broad highway of the world.
Now there's a grave—your foot is half upon it,—
It looks just like the rest ; and yet that man
Died broken-hearted.

Leonard. 'Tis a common case.
We'll take another : who is he that lies
Beneath yon ridge, the last of those three graves ?
It touches on that piece of native rock
Left in the church-yard wall.

Priest. That's Walter Ewbank.
He had as white a head and fresh a cheek
As ever were produced by youth and age
Engendering in the blood of hale fourscore.
Through five long generations had the heart
Of Walter's forefathers o'erflowed the bounds
Of their inheritance, that single cottage—
You see it yonder ! and those few green fields.
They toiled and wrought, and still, from sire to
son,

Each struggled, and each yielded as before
A little—yet a little,—and old Walter,
They left to him the family heart, and land
With other burthens than the crop it bore.
Year after year the old man still kept up
A cheerful mind,—and buffeted with bond,
Interest, and mortgages ; at last he sank,
And went into his grave before his time.
Poor Walter ! whether it was care that spurred
him

God only knows, but to the very last
He had the lightest foot in Ennerdale :
His pace was never that of an old man :
I almost see him tripping down the path
With his two grandsons after him :—but you,
Unless our Landlord be your host to-night,
Have far to travel,—and on these rough paths
Even in the longest day of midsummer—

Leonard. But those two Orphans !

Priest. Orphans !—Such they were—
Yet not while Walter lived :—for, though their
parents

Lay buried side by side as now they lie,
The old man was a father to the boys,
Two fathers in one father : and if tears,
Shed when he talked of them where they were not,
And hauntings from the infirmity of love,
Are aught of what makes up a mother's heart,
This old Man, in the day of his old age,
Was half a mother to them.—If you weep, Sir,
To hear a stranger talking about strangers,
Heaven bless you when you are among your
kindred !

Ay—you may turn that way—it is a grave
Which will bear looking at.

Leonard. These boys—I hope
They loved this good old Man ?—

Priest. They did—and truly :
But that was what we almost overlooked,
They were such darlings of each other. Yes,
Though from the cradle they had lived with
Walter,

The only kinsman near them, and though he
Inclined to both by reason of his age,
With a more fond, familiar, tenderness ;
They, notwithstanding, had much love to spare,
And it all went into each other's hearts.
Leonard, the elder by just eighteen months,
Was two years taller : 'twas a joy to see,
To hear, to meet them !—From their house the
school

Is distant three short miles, and in the time
Of storm and thaw, when every water-course
And unbridged stream, such as you may have
noticed

Crossing our roads at every hundred steps,
Was swoln into a noisy rivulet,
Would Leonard then, when elder boys remained
At home, go staggering through the slippery fords,
Bearing his brother on his back. I have seen him,
On windy days, in one of those stray brooks,
Ay, more than once I have seen him, mid-leg deep,
Their two books lying both on a dry stone,
Upon the hither side : and once I said,
As I remember, looking round these rocks
And hills on which we all of us were born,
That God who made the great book of the world
Would bless such piety—

Leonard. It may be then—

Priest. Never did worthier lads break English
bread ;

The very brightest Sunday Autumn saw
With all its mealy clusters of ripe nuts,

Could never keep those boys away from church,
Or tempt them to an hour of sabbath breach.
Leonard and James ! I warrant, every corner
Among these rocks, and every hollow place
That venturous foot could reach, to one or both
Was known as well as to the flowers that grow
there.

Like roe-bucks they went bounding o'er the hills ;
They played like two young ravens on the crags :
Then they could write, ay and speak too, as well
As many of their betters—and for Leonard !
The very night before he went away,
In my own house I put into his hand
A bible, and I'd wager house and field
That, if he be alive, he has it yet.

Leonard. It seems, these Brothers have not lived
to be

A comfort to each other—

Priest. That they might
Live to such end is what both old and young
In this our valley all of us have wished,
And what, for my part, I have often prayed :
But Leonard—

Leonard. Then James still is left among you !

Priest. 'Tis of the elder brother I am speaking:
They had an uncle;—he was at that time
A thriving man, and trafficked on the seas:
And, but for that same uncle, to this hour
Leonard had never handled rope or shroud:
For the boy loved the life which we lead here;
And though of unripe years, a stripling only,
His soul was knit to this his native soil.
But, as I said, old Walter was too weak
To strive with such a torrent; when he died,
The estate and house were sold; and all their sheep,
A pretty flock, and which, for aught I know,
Had clothed the Ewbanks for a thousand years:—
Well—all was gone, and they were destitute,
And Leonard, chiefly for his Brother's sake,
Resolved to try his fortune on the seas.
Twelve years are past since we had tidings from him.
If there were one among us who had heard
That Leonard Ewbank was come home again,
From the Great Gavel*, down by Leeza's banks,
And down the Enna, far as Egremont,
The day would be a joyous festival ;

* The Great Gavel, so called, I imagine, from its resemblance to the gable end of a house, is one of the highest of the Cumberland mountains. It stands at the head of the several vales of Ennerdale, Wastdale, and Borrowdale.

The Leeza is a river which flows into the Lake of Ennerdale : on issuing from the Lake, it changes its name, and is called the End, Eyne, or Enna. It falls into the sea a little below Egremont.

And those two bells of ours, which there you see—
Hanging in the open air—but, O good Sir !
This is sad talk—they'll never sound for him—
Living or dead.—When last we heard of him,
He was in slavery among the Moors
Upon the Barbary coast.—'Twas not a little
That would bring down his spirit ; and no doubt,
Before it ended in his death, the Youth
Was sadly crossed.—Poor Leonard ! when we
parted,

He took me by the hand, and said to me,
If e'er he should grow rich, he would return,
To live in peace upon his father's land,
And lay his bones among us.

Leonard. If that day
Should come, 't would needs be a glad day for him ;
He would himself, no doubt, be happy then
As any that should meet him—

Priest. Happy ! Sir—
Leonard. You said his kindred all were in their
graves,

And that he had one Brother—

Priest. That is but
A fellow-tale of sorrow. From his youth
James, though not sickly, yet was delicate ;
And Leonard being always by his side
Had done so many offices about him,
That, though he was not of a timid nature,
Yet still the spirit of a mountain-boy
In him was somewhat checked; and, when his
Brother

Was gone to sea, and he was left alone,
The little colour that he had was soon
Stolen from his cheek ; he drooped, and pined, and
pined—

Leonard. But these are all the graves of full-
grown men !

Priest. Ay, Sir, that passed away : we took him
to us ;

He was the child of all the dale—he lived
Three months with one, and six months with another ;
And wanted neither food, nor clothes, nor love :
And many, many happy days were his.
But, whether blithe or sad, 'tis my belief
His absent Brother still was at his heart.
And, when he dwelt beneath our roof, we found
(A practice till this time unknown to him)
That often, rising from his bed at night,
He in his sleep would walk about, and sleeping
He sought his brother Leonard.—You are moved !
Forgive me, Sir : before I spoke to you,
I judged you most unkindly.

Leonard. But this Youth,
How did he die at last ?

Priest. One sweet May-morning,
 (It will be twelve years since when Spring returns)
 He had gone forth among the new-dropped lambs,
 With two or three companions, whom their course
 Of occupation led from height to height
 Under a cloudless sun—till he, at length,
 Through weariness, or, haply, to indulge
 The humour of the moment, lagged behind.
 You see yon precipice ;—it wears the shape
 Of a vast building made of many crags ;
 And in the midst is one particular rock
 That rises like a column from the vale,
 Whence by our shepherds it is called, THE PILLAR.
 Upon its airy summit crowned with heath,
 The loiterer, not unnoticed by his comrades,
 Lay stretched at ease ; but, passing by the place
 On their return, they found that he was gone.
 No ill was feared ; till one of them by chance
 Entering, when evening was far spent, the house
 Which at that time was James's home, there learned
 That nobody had seen him all that day :
 The morning came, and still he was unheard of :
 The neighbours were alarmed, and to the brook
 Some hastened ; some ran to the lake : ere noon
 They found him at the foot of that same rock
 Dead, and with mangled limbs. The third day after
 I buried him, poor Youth, and there he lies !

Leonard. And that then is his grave !—Before
 his death

You say that he saw many happy years ?

Priest. Ay, that he did—

Leonard. And all went well with him ?—

Priest. If he had one, the youth had twenty homes.

Leonard. And you believe, then, that his mind
 was easy ?—

Priest. Yes, long before he died, he found that
 time

Is a true friend to sorrow ; and unless
 His thoughts were turned on Leonard's luckless
 fortune,

He talked about him with a cheerful love.

Leonard. He could not come to an unhallowed
 end !

Priest. Nay, God forbid !—You recollect I
 mentioned

A habit which quietude and grief
 Had brought upon him ; and we all conjectured
 That, as the day was warm, he had lain down
 On the soft heath,—and, waiting for his comrades,
 He there had fallen asleep ; that in his sleep
 He to the margin of the precipice
 Had walked, and from the summit had fallen
 headlong :

And so no doubt he perished. When the Youth

Fell, in his hand he must have grasp'd, we think,
 His shepherd's staff ; for on that Pillar of rock
 It had been caught mid way ; and there for years
 It hung ;—and mouldered there.

The Priest here ended—

The Stranger would have thanked him, but he felt
 A gushing from his heart, that took away
 The power of speech. Both left the spot in silence ;
 And Leonard, when they reached the church-yard
 gate,

As the Priest lifted up the latch, turned round,—
 And, looking at the grave, he said, “ My Brother !”
 The Vicar did not hear the words : and now,
 He pointed towards his dwelling-place, entreating
 That Leonard would partake his homely fare :
 The other thanked him with an earnest voice ;
 But added, that, the evening being calm,
 He would pursue his journey. So they parted.

It was not long ere Leonard reached a grove
 That overhung the road : he there stopped short,
 And, sitting down beneath the trees, reviewed
 All that the Priest had said : his early years
 Were with him :—his long absence, cherished hopes,
 And thoughts which had been his an hour before,
 All pressed on him with such a weight, that now,
 This vale, where he had been so happy, seemed
 A place in which he could not bear to live :
 So he relinquished all his purposes.
 He travelled back to Egremont : and thence,
 That night, he wrote a letter to the Priest,
 Reminding him of what had passed between them ;
 And adding, with a hope to be forgiven,
 That it was from the weakness of his heart
 He had not dared to tell him who he was.
 This done, he went on shipboard, and is now
 A Seaman, a grey-headed Mariner.

1800.

II.

ARTEGAL AND ELIDURE.

(SEE THE CHRONICLE OF GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH AND
 MILTON'S HISTORY OF ENGLAND)

WHERE be the temples which, in Britain's Isle,
 For his paternal Gods, the Trojan raised ?
 Gone like a morning dream, or like a pile
 Of clouds that in cerulean ether blazed !
 Ere Julius landed on her white-cliffed shore,
 They sank, delivered o'er
 To fatal dissolution ; and, I ween,
 No vestige then was left that such had ever been.

Nathless, a British record (long concealed
In old Armorica, whose secret springs
No Gothic conqueror ever drank) revealed
The marvellous current of forgotten things ;
How Brutus came, by oracles impelled,
And Albion's giants quelled,
A brood whom no civility could melt,
'Who never tasted grace, and goodness ne'er had
felt.'

By brave Corineus aided, he subdued,
And rooted out the intolerable kind ;
And this too-long-polluted land imbued
With goodly arts and usages refined ;
Whence golden harvests, cities, warlike towers,
And pleasure's sumptuous bowers ;
Whence all the fixed delights of house and home,
Friendships that will not break, and love that cannot roam.

O, happy Britain ! region all too fair
For self-delighting fancy to endure
That silence only should inhabit there,
Wild beasts, or uncouth savages impure !
But, intermingled with the generous seed,
Grew many a poisonous weed ;
Thus fares it still with all that takes its birth
From human care, or grows upon the breast of earth.

Hence, and how soon ! that war of vengeance waged
By Guendolen against her faithless lord ;
Till she, in jealous fury unassuaged
Had slain his paramour with ruthless sword :
Then, into Severn hideously defiled,
She flung her blameless child,
Sabrina,—vowing that the stream should bear
That name through every age, her hatred to declare.

So speaks the Chronicle, and tells of Lear
By his ungrateful daughters turned adrift.
Ye lightnings, hear his voice !—they cannot hear,
Nor can the winds restore his simple gift.
But One there is, a Child of nature meek,
Who comes her Sire to seek ;
And he, recovering sense, upon her breast
Leans smilingly, and sinks into a perfect rest.

There too we read of Spenser's fairy themes,
And those that Milton loved in youthful years ;
The sage enchanter Merlin's subtle schemes ;
The feats of Arthur and his knightly peers ;
Of Arthur,—who, to upper light restored,
With that terrific sword
Which yet he brandishes for future war,
Shall lift his country's fame above the polar star !

What wonder, then, if in such ample field
Of old tradition, one particular flower
Doth seemingly in vain its fragrance yield,
And bloom unnoticed even to this late hour ?
Now, gentle Muses, your assistance grant,
While I this flower transplant
Into a garden stored with Poesy ;
Where flowers and herbs unite, and haply some
weeds be,
That, wanting not wild grace, are from all mischief
free !

A KING more worthy of respect and love
Than wise Gorbionian ruled not in his day ;
And grateful Britain prospered far above
All neighbouring countries through his righteous
sway ;
He poured rewards and honours on the good ;
The oppressor he withstood ;
And while he served the Gods with reverence due
Fields smiled, and temples rose, and towns and
cities grew.

He died, whom Artegael succeeds—his son ;
But how unworthy of that sire was he !
A hopeful reign, auspiciously begun,
Was darkened soon by foul iniquity.
From crime to crime he mounted, till at length
The nobles leagued their strength
With a vexed people, and the tyrant chased ;
And, on the vacant throne, his worthier Brother
placed.

From realm to realm the humbled Exile went,
Suppliant for aid his kingdom to regain ;
In many a court, and many a warrior's tent,
He urged his persevering suit in vain.
Him, in whose wretched heart ambition failed,
Dire poverty assailed ;
And, tired with slights his pride no more could
brook,
He towards his native country cast a longing look.

Fair blew the wished-for wind—the voyage sped ;
He landed ; and, by many dangers scared,
'Poorly provided, poorly followed,'
To Calaterium's forest he repaired.
How changed from him who, born to highest place,
Had swayed the royal mace,
Flattered and feared, despised yet deified,
In Troynovant, his seat by silver Thames's side !

From that wild region where the crownless King
Lay in concealment with his scanty train,

Supporting life by water from the spring,
And such chance food as outlaws can obtain,
Unto the few whom he esteems his friends

A messenger he sends ;
And from their secret loyalty requires
Shelter and daily bread,—the sum of his desires.

While he the issue waits, at early morn
Wandering by stealth abroad, he chanced to hear
A startling outcry made by hound and horn,
From which the tusked wild boar flies in fear ;
And, scouring toward him o'er the grassy plain,
Behold the hunter train !
He bids his little company advance
With seeming unconcern and steady countenance.

The royal Elidure, who leads the chase,
Hath checked his foaming courser :—can it be !
Methinks that I should recognise that face,
Though much disguised by long adversity !
He gazed rejoicing, and again he gazed,
Confounded and amazed—
“It is the king, my brother !” and, by sound
Of his own voice confirmed, he leaps upon the
ground.

Long, strict, and tender was the embrace he gave,
Feebly returned by daunted Artegal ;
Whose natural affection doubts enslave,
And apprehensions dark and criminal.
Loth to restrain the moving interview,
The attendant lords withdrew ;
And, while they stood upon the plain apart,
Thus Elidure, by words, relieved his struggling
heart.

“By heavenly Powers conducted, we have met ;
—O Brother ! to my knowledge lost so long,
But neither lost to love, nor to regret,
Nor to my wishes lost ;—forgive the wrong,
(Such it may seem) if I thy crown have borne,
Thy royal mantle worn :
I was their natural guardian ; and 'tis just
That now I should restore what hath been held in
trust.”

A while the astonished Artegal stood mute,
Then thus exclaimed : “To me, of titles shorn,
And stripped of power ! me, feeble, destitute,
To me a kingdom ! spare the bitter scorn :
If justice ruled the breast of foreign kings,
Then, on the wide-spread wings
Of war, had I returned to claim my right ;
This will I here avow, not dreading thy despoil.”

“I do not blame thee,” Elidure replied ;
“But, if my looks did with my words agree,
I should at once be trusted, not defied,
And thou from all disquietude be free.
May the unsullied Goddess of the chase,
Who to this blessed place
At this blest moment led me, if I speak
With insincere intent, on me her vengeance wreak !

Were this same spear, which in my hand I grasp,
The British sceptre, here would I to thee
The symbol yield ; and would undo this clasp,
If it confined the robe of sovereignty.
Odious to me the pomp of regal court,
And joyless sylvan sport,
While thou art roving, wretched and forlorn,
Thy couch the dewy earth, thy roof the forest
thorn !”

Then Artegal thus spake : “I only sought,
Within this realm a place of safe retreat ;
Beware of rousing an ambitious thought ;
Beware of kindling hopes, for me unmeet !
Thou art reputed wise, but in my mind
Art pitifully blind :
Full soon this generous purpose thou may'st rue,
When that which has been done no wishes can undo.

Who, when a crown is fixed upon his head,
Would balance claim with claim, and right with
right ?
But thou—I know not how inspired, how led—
Wouldst change the course of things in all men's
sight !
And this for one who cannot imitate
Thy virtue, who may hate :
For, if, by such strange sacrifice restored,
He reign, thou still must be his king, and sovereign
lord ;

Lifted in magnanimity above
Aught that my feeble nature could perform,
Or even conceive ; surpassing me in love
Far as in power the eagle doth the worm :
I, Brother ! only should be king in name,
And govern to my shame ;
A shadow in a hated land, while all
Of glad or willing service to thy share would fall.”

“Believe it not,” said Elidure ; “respect
Awaits on virtuous life, and ever most
Attends on goodness with dominion decked,
Which stands the universal empire's boast ;
This can thy own experience testify :
Nor shall thy foes deny

That, in the gracious opening of thy reign,
Our father's spirit seemed in thee to breathe again.

And what if o'er that bright unbosoming
Clouds of disgrace and envious fortune past!
Have we not seen the glories of the spring
By veil of noontide darkness overcast?
The frith that glittered like a warrior's shield,

The sky, the gay green field,
Are vanished; gladness ceases in the groves,
And trepidation strikes the blackened mountain-
coves.

But is that gloom dissolved? how passing clear
Seems the wide world, far brighter than before!
Even so thy latent worth will re-appear,
Gladdening the people's heart from shore to shore;
For youthful faults ripe virtues shall atone;

Re-seated on thy throne,
Proof shalt thou furnish that misfortune, pain,
And sorrow, have confirmed thy native right to
reign.

But, not to overlook what thou may'st know,
Thy enemies are neither weak nor few;
And circumspect must be our course, and slow,
Or from my purpose ruin may ensue.
Dismiss thy followers;—let them calmly wait
Such change in thy estate
As I already have in thought devised;
And which, with caution due, may soon be realised."

The Story tells what courses were pursued,
Until king Elidure, with full consent
Of all his peers, before the multitude,
Rose,—and, to consummate this just intent,
Did place upon his brother's head the crown,
Relinquished by his own;
Then to his people cried, "Receive your lord,
Gorbonian's first-born son, your rightful king
restored!"

The people answered with a loud acclaim:
Yet more;—heart-smitten by the heroic deed,
The reinstated Artegal became
Earth's noblest penitent; from bondage freed
Of vice—thenceforth unable to subvert

Or shake his high desert.
Long did he reign; and, when he died, the tear
Of universal grief bedewed his honoured bier.

Thus was a Brother by a Brother saved;
With whom a crown (temptation that hath set
Discord in hearts of men till they have braved
Their nearest kin with deadly purpose met)

'Gainst duty weighed, and faithful love, did seem
A thing of no esteem;
And, from this triumph of affection pure,
He bore the lasting name of "pious Elidure!"

1815.

III.

TO A BUTTERFLY.

I 've watch'd you now a full half-hour,
Self-poised upon that yellow flower;
And, little Butterfly! indeed
I know not if you sleep or feed.
How motionless!—not frozen seas
More motionless! and then
What joy awaits you, when the breeze
Hath found you out among the trees,
And calls you forth again!

This plot of orchard-ground is ours;
My trees they are, my Sister's flowers;
Here rest your wings when they are weary;
Here lodge as in a sanctuary!
Come often to us, fear no wrong;
Sit near us on the bough!
We'll talk of sunshine and of song,
And summer days, when we were young;
Sweet childish days, that were as long
As twenty days are now.

1801.

IV.

A FAREWELL.

FAREWELL, thou little Nook of mountain-ground,
Thou rocky corner in the lowest stair
Of that magnificent temple which doth bound
One side of our whole vale with grandeur rare;
Sweet garden-orchard, eminently fair,
The loveliest spot that man hath ever found,
Farewell!—we leave thee to Heaven's peaceful care,
Thee, and the Cottage which thou dost surround.

Our boat is safely anchored by the shore,
And there will safely ride when we are gone;
The flowering shrubs that deck our humble door
Will prosper, though untended and alone;
Fields, goods, and far-off chattels we have none:
These narrow bounds contain our private store
Of things earth makes, and sun doth shine upon;
Here are they in our sight—we have no more.

Sunshine and shower be with you, bud and bell !
 For two months now in vain we shall be sought ;
 We leave you here in solitude to dwell
 With these our latest gifts of tender thought ;
 Thou, like the morning, in thy saffron coat,
 Bright gowan, and marsh-marigold, farewell !
 Whom from the borders of the Lake we brought,
 And placed together near our rocky Well.

We go for One to whom ye will be dear ;
 And she will prize this Bower, this Indian shed,
 Our own contrivance, Building without peer !
 —A gentle Maid, whose heart is lowly bred,
 Whose pleasures are in wild fields gathered,
 With joyousness, and with a thoughtful cheer,
 Will come to you ; to you herself will wed ;
 And love the blessed life that we lead here.

Dear Spot! which we have watched with tender heed,
 Bringing thee chosen plants and blossoms blown
 Among the distant mountains, flower and weed,
 Which thou hast taken to thee as thy own,
 Making all kindness registered and known ;
 Thou for our sakes, though Nature's child indeed,
 Fair in thyself and beautiful alone,
 Hast taken gifts which thou dost little need.

And O most constant, yet most fickle Place,
 That hast thy wayward moods, as thou dost show
 To them who look not daily on thy face ;
 Who, being loved, in love no bounds dost know,
 And say'st, when we forsake thee, " Let them go !"
 Thou easy-hearted Thing, with thy wild race
 Of weeds and flowers, till we return be slow,
 And travel with the year at a soft pace.

Help us to tell Her tales of years gone by,
 And this sweet spring, the best beloved and best ;
 Joy will be flown in its mortality ;
 Something must stay to tell us of the rest.
 Here, thronged with primroses, the steep rock's
 breast

Glittered at evening like a starry sky ;
 And in this bush our sparrow built her nest,
 Of which I sang one song that will not die

O happy Garden ! whose seclusion deep
 Hath been so friendly to industrious hours ;
 And to soft slumbers, that did gently steep
 Our spirits, carrying with them dreams of flowers,
 And wild notes warbled among leafy bowers ;
 Two burning months let summer overleap,
 And, coming back with Her who will be ours,
 Into thy bosom we again shall creep.

1802.

v.

STANZAS

WRITTEN IN MY POCKET-COPY OF THOMSON'S CASTLE OF
 INDOLENCE.

WITHIN our happy Castle there dwelt One
 Whom without blame I may not overlook ;
 For never sun on living creature shone
 Who more devout enjoyment with us took :
 Here on his hours he hung as on a book,
 On his own time here would he float away,
 As doth a fly upon a summer brook ;
 But go to-morrow, or belike to-day,
 Seek for him,—he is fled ; and whither none can
 say.

Thus often would he leave our peaceful home,
 And find elsewhere his business or delight ;
 Out of our Valley's limits did he roam :
 Full many a time, upon a stormy night,
 His voice came to us from the neighbouring height :
 Oft could we see him driving full in view
 At mid-day when the sun was shining bright ;
 What ill was on him, what he had to do,
 A mighty wonder bred among our quiet crew.

Ah ! piteous sight it was to see this Man
 When he came back to us, a withered flower,—
 Or like a sinful creature, pale and wan.
 Down would he sit ; and without strength or power
 Look at the common grass from hour to hour :
 And oftentimes, how long I fear to say,
 Where apple-trees in blossom made a bower,
 Retired in that sunshiny shade he lay ;
 And, like a naked Indian, slept himself away.

Great wonder to our gentle tribe it was
 Whenever from our Valley he withdrew ;
 For happier soul no living creature has
 Than he had, being here the long day through.
 Some thought he was a lover, and did woo :
 Some thought far worse of him, and judged him
 wrong ;
 But verse was what he had been wedded to ;
 And his own mind did like a tempest strong
 Come to him thus, and drove the weary Wight
 along.

With him there often walked in friendly guise,
 Or lay upon the moss by brook or tree,
 A noticeable Man with large grey eyes,
 And a pale face that seemed undoubtedly
 As if a blooming face it ought to be ;

Heavy his low-hung lip did oft appear,
 Deprest by weight of musing Phantasy ;
 Profound his forehead was, though not severe ;
 Yet some did think that he had little business here :

Sweet heaven forefend ! his was a lawful right ;
 Noisy he was, and gamesome as a boy ;
 His limbs would toss about him with delight
 Like branches when strong winds the trees annoy.
 Nor lacked his calmer hours device or toy
 To banish listlessness and irksome care ;
 He would have taught you how you might employ
 Yourself ; and many did to him repair,—
 And certes not in vain ; he had inventions rare.

Expedients, too, of simplest sort he tried :
 Long blades of grass, plucked round him as he lay,
 Made, to his ear attentively applied,
 A pipe on which the wind would deftly play ;
 Glasses he had, that little things display,
 The beetle panoplied in gems and gold,
 A mailed angel on a battle-day ;
 The mysteries that cups of flowers enfold,
 And all the gorgeous sights which fairies do behold.

He would entice that other Man to hear
 His music, and to view his imagery :
 And, sooth, these two were each to the other dear :
 No livelier love in such a place could be :
 There did they dwell—from earthly labour free,
 As happy spirits as were ever seen ;
 If but a bird, to keep them company,
 Or butterfly sate down, they were, I ween,
 As pleased as if the same had been a Maiden-queen.

1802.

VI.

LOUISA.

AFTER ACCOMPANYING HER ON A MOUNTAIN EXCURSION.

I MET Louisa in the shade,
 And, having seen that lovely Maid,
 Why should I fear to say
 That, nymph-like, she is fleet and strong,
 And down the rocks can leap along
 Like rivulets in May ?

She loves her fire, her cottage-home ;
 Yet o'er the moorland will she roam
 In weather rough and bleak ;
 And, when against the wind she strains,
 Oh ! might I kiss the mountain rains
 That sparkle on her cheek.

Take all that 's mine ' beneath the moon,'
 If I with her but half a noon
 May sit beneath the walls
 Of some old cave, or mossy nook,
 When up she winds along the brook
 To hunt the waterfalls.

1805.

VII.

STRANGE fits of passion have I known :
 And I will dare to tell,
 But in the Lover's ear alone,
 What once to me befel.

When she I loved looked every day
 Fresh as a rose in June,
 I to her cottage bent my way,
 Beneath an evening-moon.

Upon the moon I fixed my eye,
 All over the wide lea ;
 With quickening pace my horse drew nigh
 Those paths so dear to me.

And now we reached the orchard-plot ;
 And, as we climbed the hill,
 The sinking moon to Lucy's cot
 Came near, and nearer still.

In one of those sweet dreams I slept,
 Kind Nature's gentlest boon !
 And all the while my eyes I kept
 On the descending moon.

My horse moved on ; hoof after hoof
 He raised, and never stopped :
 When down behind the cottage roof,
 At once, the bright moon dropped.

What fond and wayward thoughts will slide
 Into a Lover's head !
 " O mercy !" to myself I cried,
 " If Lucy should be dead ! "

1799.

VIII.

SHE dwelt among the untrodden ways
 Beside the springs of Dove,
 A Maid whom there were none to praise
 And very few to love :

A violet by a mossy stone
Half hidden from the eye !
—Fair as a star, when only one
Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown, and few could know
When Lucy ceased to be ;
But she is in her grave, and, oh,
The difference to me !

1799.

IX.

I TRAVELLED among unknown men,
In lands beyond the sea ;
Nor, England ! did I know till then
What love I bore to thee.

'Tis past, that melancholy dream !
Nor will I quit thy shore
A second time ; for still I seem
To love thee more and more.

Among thy mountains did I feel
The joy of my desire ;
And she I cherished turned her wheel
Beside an English fire.

Thy mornings showed, thy nights concealed
The bowers where Lucy played ;
And thine too is the last green field
That Lucy's eyes surveyed.

1799.

X.

ERE with cold beads of midnight dew
Had mingled tears of thine,
I grieved, fond Youth ! that thou shouldst sue
To haughty Geraldine.

Immoveable by generous sighs,
She glories in a train
Who drag, beneath our native skies,
An oriental chain.

Pine not like them with arms across,
Forgetting in thy care
How the fast-rooted trees can toss
Their branches in mid air.

The humblest rivulet will take
Its own wild liberties ;
And, every day, the imprisoned lake
Is flowing in the breeze.

Then, crouch no more on suppliant knee,
But scorn with scorn outbrave ;
A Briton, even in love, should be
A subject, not a slave !

1826.

XI.

TO ———

Look at the fate of summer flowers,
Which blow at daybreak, droop ere even-song ;
And, grieved for their brief date, confess that ours,
Measured by what we are and ought to be,
Measured by all that, trembling, we foresee,
Is not so long !

If human Life do pass away,
Perishing yet more swiftly than the flower,
If we are creatures of a *winter's* day ;
What space hath Virgin's beauty to disclose
Her sweets, and triumph o'er the breathing rose ?
Not even an hour !

The deepest grove whose foliage hid
The happiest lovers Arcady might boast,
Could not the entrance of this thought forbid :
O be thou wise as they, soul-gifted Maid !
Nor rate too high what must so quickly fade,
So soon be lost.

Then shall love teach some virtuous Youth
'To draw, out of the object of his eyes,'
The while on thee they gaze in simple truth,
Hues more exalted, 'a refined Form,'
That dreads not age, nor suffers from the worm,
And never dies.

1824.

XII.

THE FORSAKEN.

THE peace which others seek they find ;
The heaviest storms not longest last ;
Heaven grants even to the guiltiest mind
An amnesty for what is past ;
When will my sentence be reversed ?
I only pray to know the worst ;
And wish as if my heart would burst.

O weary struggle ! silent years
Tell seemingly no doubtful tale ;
And yet they leave it short, and fears
And hopes are strong and will prevail.

My calmest faith escapes not pain ;
And, feeling that the hope is vain,
I think that he will come again.

XIII.

Tris said, that some have died for love :
And here and there a church-yard grave is found
In the cold north's unhallowed ground,
Because the wretched man himself had slain,
His love was such a grievous pain.
And there is one whom I five years have known ;
He dwells alone
Upon Helvellyn's side :
He loved—the pretty Barbara died ;
And thus he makes his moan :
Three years had Barbara in her grave been laid
When thus his moan he made :

“ Oh, move, thou Cottage, from behind that oak !
Or let the aged tree uprooted lie,
That in some other way yon smoke
May mount into the sky !
The clouds pass on ; they from the heavens depart :
I look—the sky is empty space ;
I know not what I trace ;
But when I cease to look, my hand is on my heart.

O ! what a weight is in these shades ! Ye leaves,
That murmur once so dear, when will it cease ?
Your sound my heart of rest bereaves,
It robs my heart of peace.
Thou Thrush, that singest loud—and loud and free,
Into yon row of willows flit,
Upon that alder sit ;
Or sing another song, or choose another tree.

Roll back, sweet Rill ! back to thy mountain-bounds,
And there for ever be thy waters chained !
For thou dost haunt the air with sounds
That cannot be sustained ;
If still beneath that pine-tree's ragged bough
Headlong yon waterfall must come,
Oh let it then be dumb !
Be anything, sweet Rill, but that which thou art now.

Thou Eglantine, so bright with sunny showers,
Proud as a rainbow spanning half the vale,
Thou one fair shrub, oh ! shed thy flowers,
And stir not in the gale.

For thus to see thee nodding in the air,
To see thy arch thus stretch and bend,
Thus rise and thus descend,—
Disturbs me till the sight is more than I can bear.”

The Man who makes this feverish complaint
Is one of giant stature, who could dance
Equipped from head to foot in iron mail.
Ah gentle Love ! if ever thought was thine
To store up kindred hours for me, thy face
Turn from me, gentle Love ! nor let me walk
Within the sound of Emma's voice, nor know
Such happiness as I have known to-day.

1800.

XIV.

A COMPLAINT.

THERE is a change—and I am poor ;
Your love hath been, nor long ago,
A fountain at my fond heart's door,
Whose only business was to flow ;
And flow it did ; not taking heed
Of its own bounty, or my need.

What happy moments did I count !
Blest was I then all bliss above !
Now, for that consecrated fount
Of murmuring, sparkling, living love,
What have I ? shall I dare to tell ?
A comfortless and hidden well.

A well of love—it may be deep—
I trust it is,—and never dry :
What matter ? if the waters sleep
In silence and obscurity.
—Such change, and at the very door
Of my fond heart, hath made me poor.

1806.

XV.

TO ———

LET other bards of angels sing,
Bright suns without a spot ;
But thou art no such perfect thing :
Rejoice that thou art not !

Heed not tho' none should call thee fair ;
 So, Mary, let it be
 If nought in loveliness compare
 With what thou art to me.

True beauty dwells in deep retreats,
 Whose veil is unremoved
 Till heart with heart in concord beats,
 And the lover is beloved.

1824.

XVI.

YES ! thou art fair, yet be not moved
 To scorn the declaration,
 That sometimes I in thee have loved
 My fancy's own creation.

Imagination needs must stir ;
 Dear Maid, this truth believe,
 Minds that have nothing to confer
 Find little to perceive.

Be pleased that nature made thee fit
 To feed my heart's devotion,
 By laws to which all Forms submit
 In sky, air, earth, and ocean.

XVII.

How rich that forehead's calm expanse !
 How bright that heaven-directed glance !
 —Waft her to glory, wingèd Powers,
 Ere sorrow be renewed,
 And intercourse with mortal hours
 Bring back a humbler mood !
 So looked Cecilia when she drew
 An Angel from his station ;
 So looked ; not ceasing to pursue
 Her tuneful adoration !

But hand and voice alike are still ;
 No sound *here* sweeps away the will
 That gave it birth : in service meek
 One upright arm sustains the cheek,
 And one across the bosom lies—
 That rose, and now forgets to rise,
 Subdued by breathless harmonies
 Of meditative feeling ;
 Mute strains from worlds beyond the skies,
 Through the pure light of female eyes,
 Their sanctity revealing !

1824.

XVIII.

WHAT heavenly smiles ! O Lady mine
 Through my very heart they shine ;
 And, if my brow gives back their light,
 Do thou look gladly on the sight ;
 As the clear Moon with modest pride
 Beholds her own bright beams
 Reflected from the mountain's side
 And from the headlong streams.

XIX.

TO ———

O DEARER far than light and life are dear,
 Full oft our human foresight I deplore ;
 Trembling, through my unworthiness, with fear
 That friends, by death disjoined, may meet no more !

Misgivings, hard to vanquish or control,
 Mix with the day, and cross the hour of rest ;
 While all the future, for thy purer soul,
 With 'sober certainties' of love is blest.

That sigh of thine, not meant for human ear,
 Tells that these words thy humbleness offend ;
 Yet bear me up—else faltering in the rear
 Of a steep march : support me to the end.

Peace settles where the intellect is meek,
 And Love is dutiful in thought and deed ;
 Through Thee communion with that Love I seek :
 The faith Heaven strengthens where *he* moulds the
 Creed.

1824.

XX.

LAMENT OF MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS.

ON THE EVE OF A NEW YEAR.

I.

SMILE of the Moon !—for so I name
 That silent greeting from above ;
 A gentle flash of light that came
 From her whom drooping captives love ;
 Or art thou of still higher birth ?
 Thou that didst part the clouds of earth,
 My torpor to reprove !

II.

Bright boon of pitying Heaven !—alas,
I may not trust thy placid cheer !
Pondering that Time to-night will pass
The threshold of another year ;
For years to me are sad and dull ;
My very moments are too full
Of hopelessness and fear.

III.

And yet, the soul-awakening gleam,
That struck perchance the farthest cone
Of Scotland's rocky wilds, did seem
To visit me, and me alone ;
Me, unapproached by any friend,
Save those who to my sorrows lend
Tears due unto their own.

IV.

To-night the church-tower bells will ring
Through these wide realms a festive peal ;
To the new year a welcoming ;
A tuneful offering for the weal
Of happy millions lulled in sleep ;
While I am forced to watch and weep,
By wounds that may not heal.

V.

Born all too high, by wedlock raised
Still higher—to be cast thus low !
Would that mine eyes had never gazed
On aught of more ambitious show
Than the sweet flowerets of the fields !
—It is my royal state that yields
This bitterness of woe.

VI.

Yet how ?—for I, if there be truth
In the world's voice, was passing fair ;
And beauty, for confiding youth,
Those shocks of passion can prepare
That kill the bloom before its time ;
And blanch, without the owner's crime,
The most resplendent hair.

VII.

Unblest distinction ! showered on me
To bind a lingering life in chains :
All that could quit my grasp, or flee,
Is gone ;—but not the subtle stains
Fixed in the spirit ; for even here
Can I be proud that jealous fear
Of what I was remains.

VIII.

A Woman rules my prison's key ;
A sister Queen, against the bent
Of law and holiest sympathy,
Detains me, doubtful of the event ;
Great God, who feel'st for my distress,
My thoughts are all that I possess,
O keep them innocent !

IX.

Farewell desire of human aid,
Which abject mortals vainly court !
By friends deceived, by foes betrayed,
Of fears the prey, of hopes the sport ;
Nought but the world-redeeming Cross
Is able to supply my loss,
My burthen to support.

X.

Hark ! the death-note of the year
Sounded by the castle-clock !
From her sunk eyes a stagnant tear
Stole forth, unsettled by the shock ;
But oft the woods renewed their green,
Ere the tired head of Scotland's Queen
Reposed upon the block !

1317

XXI.

THE COMPLAINT

OF A FORSAKEN INDIAN WOMAN.

[When a Northern Indian, from sickness, is unable to continue his journey with his companions, he is left behind, covered over with deer-skins, and is supplied with water, food, and fuel, if the situation of the place will afford it. He is informed of the track which his companions intend to pursue, and if he be unable to follow, or overtake them, he perishes alone in the desert ; unless he should have the good fortune to fall in with some other tribes of Indians. The females are equally, or still more, exposed to the same fate. See that very interesting work HEARNE'S JOURNEY from HUDSON'S BAY to the NORTHERN OCEAN. In the high northern latitudes, as the same writer informs us, when the northern lights vary their position in the air, they make a rustling and a crackling noise, as alluded to in the following poem.]

I.

BEFORE I see another day,
Oh let my body die away !
In sleep I heard the northern gleams ;
The stars, they were among my dreams ;
In rustling conflict through the skies,
I heard, I saw the flashes drive,

And yet they are upon my eyes,
And yet I am alive ;
Before I see another day,
Oh let my body die away !

II.

My fire is dead : it knew no pain ;
Yet is it dead, and I remain :
All stiff with ice the ashes lie ;
And they are dead, and I will die.
When I was well, I wished to live,
For clothes, for warmth, for food, and fire ;
But they to me no joy can give,
No pleasure now, and no desire.
Then here contented will I lie !
Alone, I cannot fear to die.

III.

Alas ! ye might have dragged me on
Another day, a single one !
Too soon I yielded to despair ;
Why did ye listen to my prayer ?
When ye were gone my limbs were stronger ;
And oh, how grievously I rue,
That, afterwards, a little longer,
My friends, I did not follow you !
For strong and without pain I lay,
Dear friends, when ye were gone away.

IV.

My Child ! they gave thee to another,
A woman who was not thy mother.
When from my arms my Babe they took,
On me how strangely did he look !
Through his whole body something ran,
A most strange working did I see ;
—As if he strove to be a man,
That he might pull the sledge for me :
And then he stretched his arms, how wild !
Oh mercy ! like a helpless child.

V.

My little joy ! my little pride !
In two days more I must have died.
Then do not weep and grieve for me ;
I feel I must have died with thee.
O wind, that o'er my head art flying
The way my friends their course did bend,
I should not feel the pain of dying,
Could I with thee a message send ;
Too soon, my friends, ye went away ;
For I had many things to say.

VI.

I'll follow you across the snow ;
Ye travel heavily and slow ;
In spite of all my weary pain
I'll look upon your tents again.
—My fire is dead, and snowy white
The water which beside it stood :
The wolf has come to me to-night,
And he has stolen away my food.
For ever left alone am I ;
Then wherefore should I fear to die ?

VII.

Young as I am, my course is run,
I shall not see another sun ;
I cannot lift my limbs to know
If they have any life or no.
My poor forsaken Child, if I
For once could have thee close to me,
With happy heart I then would die,
And my last thought would happy be ;
But thou, dear Babe, art far away,
Nor shall I see another day.

1798.

XXII.

THE LAST OF THE FLOCK.

I.

In distant countries have I been,
And yet I have not often seen
A healthy man, a man full grown,
Weep in the public roads, alone.
But such a one, on English ground,
And in the broad highway, I met ;
Along the broad highway he came,
His cheeks with tears were wet :
Sturdy he seemed, though he was sad ;
And in his arms a Lamb he had.

II.

He saw me, and he turned aside,
As if he wished himself to hide :
And with his coat did then essay
To wipe those briny tears away.
I followed him, and said, " My friend,
What ails you ? wherefore weep you so ? "
—" Shame on me, Sir ! this lusty Lamb,
He makes my tears to flow.
To-day I fetched him from the rock ;
He is the last of all my flock.

III.

When I was young, a single man,
And after youthful follies ran,
Though little given to care and thought,
Yet, so it was, an ewe I bought ;
And other sheep from her I raised,
As healthy sheep as you might see ;
And then I married, and was rich
As I could wish to be ;
Of sheep I numbered a full score,
And every year increased my store.

IV.

Year after year my stock it grew ;
And from this one, this single ewe,
Full fifty comely sheep I raised,
As fine a flock as ever grazed !
Upon the Quantock hills they fed ;
They throve, and we at home did thrive :
—This lusty Lamb of all my store
Is all that is alive ;
And now I care not if we die,
And perish all of poverty.

V.

Six Children, Sir ! had I to feed ;
Hard labour in a time of need !
My pride was tamed, and in our grief
I of the Parish asked relief.
They said, I was a wealthy man ;
My sheep upon the uplands fed,
And it was fit that thence I took
Whereof to buy us bread.
'Do this : how can we give to you,'
They cried, 'what to the poor is due ?'

VI.

I sold a sheep, as they had said,
And bought my little children bread,
And they were healthy with their food ;
For me—it never did me good.
A woeful time it was for me,
To see the end of all my gains,
The pretty flock which I had reared
With all my care and pains,
To see it melt like snow away—
For me it was a woeful day.

VII.

Another still ! and still another !
A little lamb, and then its mother !
It was a vein that never stopped—
Like blood-drops from my heart they dropped.

'Till thirty were not left alive
They dwindled, dwindled, one by one ;
And I may say, that many a time
I wished they all were gone—
Reckless of what might come at last
Were but the bitter struggle past.

VIII.

To wicked deeds I was inclined,
And wicked fancies crossed my mind ;
And every man I chanced to see,
I thought he knew some ill of me :
No peace, no comfort could I find,
No ease, within doors or without ;
And, crazily and wearily
I went my work about ;
And oft was moved to flee from home,
And hide my head where wild beasts roam.

IX.

Sir ! 'twas a precious flock to me,
As dear as my own children be ;
For daily with my growing store
I loved my children more and more.
Alas ! it was an evil time ;
God cursed me in my sore distress ;
I prayed, yet every day I thought
I loved my children less ;
And every week, and every day,
My flock it seemed to melt away.

X.

They dwindled, Sir, sad sight to see !
From ten to five, from five to three,
A lamb, a wether, and a ewe ;—
And then at last from three to two ;
And, of my fifty, yesterday
I had but only one :
And here it lies upon my arm,
Alas ! and I have none ;—
To-day I fetched it from the rock ;
It is the last of all my flock."

1798.

XXIII.

REPENTANCE.

A PASTORAL BALLAD.

THE fields which with covetous spirit we sold,
Those beautiful fields, the delight of the day,
Would have brought us more good than a burthen
of gold,
Could we but have been as contented as they.

When the troublesome Tempter beset us, said I,
 'Let him come, with his purse proudly grasped in
 his hand ;

But, Allan, be true to me, Allan,—we'll die
 Before he shall go with an inch of the land !'

There dwelt we, as happy as birds in their bowers ;
 Unfettered as bees that in gardens abide ;
 We could do what we liked with the land, it was ours ;
 And for us the brook murmured that ran by its side.

But now we are strangers, go early or late ;
 And often, like one overburthened with sin,
 With my hand on the latch of the half-opened gate,
 I look at the fields, but I cannot go in !

When I walk by the hedge on a bright summer's
 day,
 Or sit in the shade of my grandfather's tree,
 A stern face it puts on, as if ready to say,
 'What ails you, that you must come creeping to me !'

With our pastures about us, we could not be sad ;
 Our comfort was near if we ever were crost ;
 But the comfort, the blessings, and wealth that we
 had,
 We slighted them all,—and our birth-right was lost.

Oh, ill-judging sire of an innocent son
 Who must now be a wanderer ! but peace to that
 strain !

Think of evening's repose when our labour was done,
 The sabbath's return ; and its leisure's soft chain !

And in sickness, if night had been sparing of sleep,
 How cheerful, at sunrise, the hill where I stood,
 Looking down on the kine, and our treasure of sheep
 That besprinkled the field ; 'twas like youth in my
 blood !

Now I cleave to the house, and am dull as a snail ;
 And, oftentimes, hear the church-bell with a sigh,
 That follows the thought—We've no land in the vale,
 Save six feet of earth where our forefathers lie !

1804.

XXIV.

THE AFFLICTION OF MARGARET —.

I.

WHERE art thou, my beloved Son,
 Where art thou, worse to me than dead ?
 Oh find me, prosperous or undone !
 Or, if the grave be now thy bed,

Why am I ignorant of the same
 That I may rest ; and neither blame
 Nor sorrow may attend thy name ?

II.

Seven years, alas ! to have received
 No tidings of an only child ;
 To have despaired, have hoped, believed,
 And been for evermore beguiled ;
 Sometimes with thoughts of very bliss !
 I catch at them, and then I miss ;
 Was ever darkness like to this ?

III.

He was among the prime in worth,
 An object beauteous to behold ;
 Well born, well bred ; I sent him forth
 Ingenuous, innocent, and bold :
 If things ensued that wanted grace,
 As hath been said, they were not base ;
 And never blush was on my face.

IV.

Ah ! little doth the young-one dream,
 When full of play and childish cares,
 What power is in his wildest scream,
 Heard by his mother unawares !
 He knows it not, he cannot guess :
 Years to a mother bring distress ;
 But do not make her love the less.

V.

Neglect me ! no, I suffered long
 From that ill thought ; and, being blind,
 Said, 'Pride shall help me in my wrong
 Kind mother have I been, as kind
 As ever breathed : ' and that is true ;
 I've wet my path with tears like dew,
 Weeping for him when no one knew.

VI.

My Son, if thou be humbled, poor,
 Hopeless of honour and of gain,
 Oh ! do not dread thy mother's door ;
 Think not of me with grief and pain :
 I now can see with better eyes ;
 And worldly grandeur I despise,
 And fortune with her gifts and lies.

VII.

Alas ! the fowls of heaven have wings,
 And blasts of heaven will aid their flight ;
 They mount—how short a voyage brings
 The wanderers back to their delight !

Chains tie us down by land and sea ;
And wishes, vain as mine, may be
All that is left to comfort thee.

VII.

Perhaps some dungeon hears thee groan,
Maimed, mangled by inhuman men ;
Or thou upon a desert thrown
Inheritest the lion's den ;
Or hast been summoned to the deep,
Thou, thou and all thy mates, to keep
An incommunicable sleep.

IX.

I look for ghosts ; but none will force
Their way to me : 'tis falsely said
That there was ever intercourse
Between the living and the dead ;
For, surely, then I should have sight
Of him I wait for day and night,
With love and longings infinite.

X.

My apprehensions come in crowds ;
I dread the rustling of the grass ;
The very shadows of the clouds
Have power to shake me as they pass :
I question things and do not find
One that will answer to my mind ;
And all the world appears unkind.

XI.

Beyond participation lie
My troubles, and beyond relief :
If any chance to heave a sigh,
They pity me, and not my grief.
Then come to me, my Son, or send
Some tidings that my woes may end ;
I have no other earthly friend !

1804.

XXV.

THE COTTAGER TO HER INFANT.

BY MY SISTER.

THE days are cold, the nights are long,
The north-wind sings a doleful song ;
Then hush again upon my breast ;
All merry things are now at rest,
Save thee, my pretty Love !

The kitten sleeps upon the hearth,
The crickets long have ceased their mirth ;

There's nothing stirring in the house
Save one *wee*, hungry, nibbling mouse,
Then why so busy thou ?

Nay ! start not at that sparkling light ;
'Tis but the moon that shines so bright
On the window pane bedropped with rain :
Then, little Darling ! sleep again,
And wake when it is day.

1805.

XXVI.

MATERNAL GRIEF.

DEPARTED Child ! I could forget thee once
Though at my bosom nursed ; this woeful gain
Thy dissolution brings, that in my soul
Is present and perpetually abides
A shadow, never, never to be displaced
By the returning substance, seen or touched,
Seen by mine eyes, or clasped in my embrace.
Absence and death how differ they ! and how
Shall I admit that nothing can restore
What one short sigh so easily removed ?—
Death, life, and sleep, reality and thought,
Assist me, God, their boundaries to know,
O teach me calm submission to thy Will !

The Child she mourned had overstepped the pale
Of Infancy, but still did breathe the air
That sanctifies its confines, and partook
Reflected beams of that celestial light
To all the Little-ones on sinful earth
Not unvouchsafed—a light that warmed and
cheered
Those several qualities of heart and mind
Which, in her own blest nature, rooted deep,
Daily before the Mother's watchful eye,
And not hers only, their peculiar charms
Unfolded,—beauty, for its present self,
And for its promises to future years,
With not unfrequent rapture fondly hailed.

Have you espied upon a dewy lawn
A pair of Leverets each provoking each
To a continuance of their fearless sport,
Two separate Creatures in their several gifts
Abounding, but so fashioned that, in all
That Nature prompts them to display, their looks,
Their starts of motion and their fits of rest,
An undistinguishable style appears
And character of gladness, as if Spring
Lodged in their innocent bosoms, and the spirit
Of the rejoicing morning were their own.

Such union, in the lovely Girl maintained
 And her twin Brother, had the parent seen,
 Ere, pouncing like a ravenous bird of prey,
 Death in a moment parted them, and left
 The Mother, in her turns of anguish, worse
 Than desolate ; for oft-times from the sound
 Of the survivor's sweetest voice (dear child,
 He knew it not) and from his happiest looks,
 Did she extract the food of self-reproach,
 As one that lived ungrateful for the stay
 By Heaven afforded to uphold her maimed
 And tottering spirit. And full oft the Boy,
 Now first acquainted with distress and grief,
 Shrunk from his Mother's presence, shunned with
 fear

Her sad approach, and stole away to find,
 In his known haunts of joy where'er he might,
 A more congenial object. But, as time
 Softened her pangs and reconciled the child
 To what he saw, he gradually returned,
 Like a scared Bird encouraged to renew
 A broken intercourse ; and, while his eyes
 Were yet with pensive fear and gentle awe
 Turned upon her who bore him, she would stoop
 To imprint a kiss that lacked not power to spread
 Faint colour over both their pallid cheeks,
 And stilled his tremulous lip. Thus they were calmed
 And cheered ; and now together breathe fresh air
 In open fields ; and when the glare of day
 Is gone, and twilight to the Mother's wish
 Befriends the observance, readily they join
 In walks whose boundary is the lost One's grave,
 Which he with flowers hath planted, finding there
 Amusement, where the Mother does not miss
 Dear consolation, kneeling on the turf
 In prayer, yet blending with that solemn rite
 Of pious faith the vanities of grief ;
 For such, by pitying Angels and by Spirits
 Transferred to regions upon which the clouds
 Of our weak nature rest not, must be deemed
 Those willing tears, and unforbidden sighs,
 And all those tokens of a cherished sorrow,
 Which, soothed and sweetened by the grace of
 Heaven

As now it is, seems to her own fond heart,
 Immortal as the love that gave it being.

XXVII.

THE SAILOR'S MOTHER.

ONE morning (raw it was and wet—
 A foggy day in winter time)
 A Woman on the road I met,
 Not old, though something past her prime :

Majestic in her person, tall and straight ;
 And like a Roman matron's was her mien and gait.

The ancient spirit is not dead ;
 Old times, thought I, are breathing there ;
 Proud was I that my country bred
 Such strength, a dignity so fair :
 She begged an alms, like one in poor estate ;
 I looked at her again, nor did my pride abate.

When from these lofty thoughts I woke,
 "What is it," said I, "that you bear,
 Beneath the covert of your Cloak,
 Protected from this cold damp air ?"
 She answered, soon as she the question heard,
 "A simple burthen, Sir, a little Singing-bird."

And, thus continuing, she said,
 "I had a Son, who many a day
 Sailed on the seas, but he is dead ;
 In Denmark he was cast away :
 And I have travelled weary miles to see
 If aught which he had owned might still remain
 for me.

The bird and cage they both were his :
 'Twas my Son's bird ; and neat and trim
 He kept it : many voyages
 The singing-bird had gone with him ;
 When last he sailed, he left the bird behind ;
 From bodings, as might be, that hung upon his mind.

He to a fellow-lodger's care
 Had left it, to be watched and fed,
 And pipe its song in safety ;—there
 I found it when my Son was dead ;
 And now, God help me for my little wit !
 I bear it with me, Sir ;—he took so much delight
 in it."

1800.

XXVIII.

THE CHILDLESS FATHER.

"Up, Timothy, up with your staff and away !
 Not a soul in the village this morning will stay ;
 The hare has just started from Hamilton's grounds,
 And Skiddaw is glad with the cry of the hounds."

—Of coats and of jackets grey, scarlet, and green,
 On the slopes of the pastures all colours were seen ;
 With their comely blue aprons, and caps white as
 snow,
 The girls on the hills made a holiday show.

Fresh sprigs of green box-wood, not six months
before,
Filled the funeral basin * at Timothy's door ;
A coffin through Timothy's threshold had past ;
One Child did it bear, and that Child was his last.

Now fast up the dell came the noise and the fray,
The horse and the horn, and the hark ! hark away !
Old Timothy took up his staff, and he shut
With a leisurely motion the door of his hut.

Perhaps to himself at that moment he said ;
'The key I must take, for my Ellen is dead.'
But of this in my ears not a word did he speak ;
And he went to the chase with a tear on his cheek.

1800.

XXIX.

THE EMIGRANT MOTHER.

ONCE in a lonely hamlet I sojourned
In which a Lady driven from France did dwell ;
The big and lesser griefs with which she mourned,
In friendship she to me would often tell.

This Lady, dwelling upon British ground,
Where she was childless, daily would repair
To a poor neighbouring cottage ; as I found,
For sake of a young Child whose home was there.

Once having seen her clasp with fond embrace
This Child, I chanted to myself a lay,
Endeavouring, in our English tongue, to trace
Such things as she unto the Babe might say :
And thus, from what I heard and knew, or guessed,
My song the workings of her heart expressed.

I.

"Dear Babe, thou daughter of another,
One moment let me be thy mother !
An infant's face and looks are thine
And sure a mother's heart is mine :
Thy own dear mother's far away,
At labour in the harvest field :
Thy little sister is at play ;—
What warmth, what comfort would it yield
To my poor heart, if thou wouldst be
One little hour a child to me !

II.

Across the waters I am come,
And I have left a babe at home :
A long, long way of land and sea !
Come to me—I'm no enemy :
I am the same who at thy side
Sate yesterday, and made a nest
For thee, sweet Baby !—thou hast tried,
Thou know'st the pillow of my breast ;
Good, good art thou :—alas ! to me
Far more than I can be to thee.

III.

Here, little Darling, dost thou lie ;
An infant thou, a mother I !
Mine wilt thou be, thou hast no fears ;
Mine art thou—spite of these my tears.
Alas ! before I left the spot,
My baby and its dwelling-place ;
The nurse said to me, 'Tears should not
Be shed upon an infant's face,
It was unlucky'—no, no, no ;
No truth is in them who say so !

IV.

My own dear Little-one will sigh,
Sweet Babe ! and they will let him die.
'He pines,' they'll say, 'it is his doom,
And you may see his hour is come.'
Oh ! had he but thy cheerful smiles,
Limbs stout as thine, and lips as gay,
Thy looks, thy cunning, and thy wiles,
And countenance like a summer's day,
They would have hopes of him ;—and then
I should behold his face again !

V.

'Tis gone—like dreams that we forget ;
There was a smile or two—yet—yet
I can remember them, I see
The smiles, worth all the world to me.
Dear Baby ! I must lay thee down ;
Thou troublest me with strange alarms ;
Smiles hast thou, bright ones of thy own ;
I cannot keep thee in my arms ;
For they confound me ;—where—where is
That last, that sweetest smile of his ?

VI.

Oh ! how I love thee !—we will stay
Together here this one half day.
My sister's child, who bears my name,
From France to sheltering England came ;

* In several parts of the North of England, when a funeral takes place, a basin full of sprigs of box-wood is placed at the door of the house from which the coffin is taken up, and each person who attends the funeral ordinarily takes a sprig of this box-wood, and throws it into the grave of the deceased.

She with her mother crossed the sea ;
 The babe and mother near me dwell :
 Yet does my yearning heart to thee
 Turn rather, though I love her well :
 Rest, little Stranger, rest thee here !
 Never was any child more dear !

VII.

—I cannot help it ; ill intent
 I've none, my pretty Innocent !
 I weep—I know they do thee wrong,
 These tears—and my poor idle tongue.
 Oh, what a kiss was that ! my cheek
 How cold it is ! but thou art good ;
 Thine eyes are on me—they would speak,
 I think, to help me if they could.
 Blessings upon that soft, warm face,
 My heart again is in its place !

VIII.

While thou art mine, my little Love,
 This cannot be a sorrowful grove ;
 Contentment, hope, and mother's glee,
 I seem to find them all in thee :
 Here 's grass to play with, here are flowers ;
 I 'll call thee by my darling's name ;
 Thou hast, I think, a look of ours,
 Thy features seem to me the same ;
 His little sister thou shalt be ;
 And, when once more my home I see,
 I 'll tell him many tales of Thee."

1802.

XXX.

VAUDRACOUR AND JULIA.

The following tale was written as an Episode, in a work
 from which its length may perhaps exclude it. The
 facts are true ; no invention as to these has been
 exercised, as none was needed.

O HAPPY time of youthful lovers (thus
 My story may begin) O balmy time,
 In which a love-knot on a lady's brow
 Is fairer than the fairest star in heaven !
 To such inheritance of blessed fancy
 (Fancy that sports more desperately with minds
 Than ever fortune hath been known to do)
 The high-born Vaudracour was brought, by years
 Whose progress had a little overstepped
 His stripling prime. A town of small repute,
 Among the vine-clad mountains of Auvergne,
 Was the Youth's birth-place. There he wooed a
 Maid
 Who heard the heart-felt music of his suit

With answering vows. Plebeian was the stock,
 Plebeian, though ingenuous, the stock,
 From which her graces and her honours sprung :
 And hence the father of the enamoured Youth,
 With haughty indignation, spurned the thought
 Of such alliance.—From their cradles up,
 With but a step between their several homes,
 Twins had they been in pleasure ; after strife
 And petty quarrels, had grown fond again ;
 Each other's advocate, each other's stay ;
 And, in their happiest moments, not content,
 If more divided than a sportive pair
 Of sea-fowl, conscious both that they are hovering
 Within the eddy of a common blast,
 Or hidden only by the concave depth
 Of neighbouring billows from each other's sight.

Thus, not without concurrence of an age
 Unknown to memory, was an earnest given
 By ready nature for a life of love,
 For endless constancy, and placid truth ;
 But whatso'er of such rare treasure lay
 Reserved, had fate permitted, for support
 Of their maturer years, his present mind
 Was under fascination ;—he beheld
 A vision, and adored the thing he saw.
 Arabian fiction never filled the world
 With half the wonders that were wrought for him.
 Earth breathed in one great presence of the spring ;
 Life turned the meanest of her implements,
 Before his eyes, to price above all gold ;
 The house she dwelt in was a sainted shrine ;
 Her chamber-window did surpass in glory
 The portals of the dawn ; all paradise
 Could, by the simple opening of a door,
 Let itself in upon him :—pathways, walks,
 Swarmed with enchantment, till his spirit sank,
 Surcharged, within him, overblest to move
 Beneath a sun that wakes a weary world
 To its dull round of ordinary cares ;
 A man too happy for mortality !

So passed the time, till whether through effect
 Of some unguarded moment that dissolved
 Virtuous restraint—ah, speak it, think it, not !
 Deem rather that the fervent Youth, who saw
 So many bars between his present state
 And the dear haven where he wished to be
 In honourable wedlock with his Love,
 Was in his judgment tempted to decline
 To perilous weakness, and entrust his cause
 To nature for a happy end of all ;
 Deem that by such fond hope the Youth was swayed,
 And bear with their transgression, when I add

That Julia, wanting yet the name of wife,
Carried about her for a secret grief
The promise of a mother.

To conceal

The threatened shame, the parents of the Maid
Found means to hurry her away by night,
And unforewarned, that in some distant spot
She might remain shrouded in privacy,
Until the babe was born. When morning came,
The Lover, thus bereft, stung with his loss,
And all uncertain whither he should turn,
Chafed like a wild beast in the toils; but soon
Discovering traces of the fugitives,
Their steps he followed to the Maid's retreat.
Easily may the sequel be divined—
Walks to and fro—watchings at every hour;
And the fair Captive, who, when'er she may,
Is busy at her casement as the swallow
Fluttering its pinions, almost within reach,
About the pendent nest, did thus espy
Her Lover!—thence a stolen interview,
Accomplished under friendly shade of night.

I pass the raptures of the pair;—such theme
Is, by innumerable poets, touched
In more delightful verse than skill of mine
Could fashion; chiefly by that darling bard
Who told of Juliet and her Romeo,
And of the lark's note heard before its time,
And of the streaks that laced the severing clouds
In the unrelenting east.—Through all her courts
The vacant city slept; the busy winds,
That keep no certain intervals of rest,
Moved not; meanwhile the galaxy displayed
Her fires, that like mysterious pulses beat
Aloft;—momentous but uneasy bliss!
To their full hearts the universe seemed hung
On that brief meeting's slender filament!

They parted; and the generous Vaudracour
Reached speedily the native threshold, bent
On making (so the Lovers had agreed)
A sacrifice of birthright to attain
A final portion from his father's hand;
Which granted, Bride and Bridegroom then would
flee

To some remote and solitary place,
Shady as night, and beautiful as heaven,
Where they may live, with no one to behold
Their happiness, or to disturb their love.
But now of this no whisper; not the less,
If ever an obtrusive word were dropped
Touching the matter of his passion, still,
In his stern father's hearing, Vaudracour

Persisted openly that death alone
Should abrogate his human privilege
Divine, of swearing everlasting truth,
Upon the altar, to the Maid he loved.

"You shall be baffled in your mad intent
If there be justice in the court of France,"
Muttered the Father.—From these words the Youth
Conceived a terror; and, by night or day,
Stirred nowhere without weapons, that full soon
Found dreadful provocation: for at night
When to his chamber he retired, attempt
Was made to seize him by three armed men,
Acting, in furtherance of the father's will,
Under a private signet of the State.
One the rash Youth's ungovernable hand
Slew, and as quickly to a second gave
A perilous wound—he shuddered to behold
The breathless corse; then peacefully resigned
His person to the law, was lodged in prison,
And wore the fetters of a criminal.

Have you observed a tuft of winged seed
That, from the dandelion's naked stalk,
Mounted aloft, is suffered not to use
Its natural gifts for purposes of rest,
Driven by the autumnal whirlwind to and fro
Through the wide element? or have you marked
The heavier substance of a leaf-clad bough,
Within the vortex of a foaming flood,
Tormented? by such aid you may conceive
The perturbation that ensued;—ah, no!
Desperate the Maid—the Youth is stained with
blood;
Unmatchable on earth is their disquiet!
Yet as the troubled seed and tortured bough
Is Man, subjected to despotic sway.

For him, by private influence with the Court,
Was pardon gained, and liberty procured;
But not without exaction of a pledge,
Which liberty and love dispersed in air.
He flew to her from whom they would divide him—
He clove to her who could not give him peace—
Yea, his first word of greeting was,—“All right
Is gone from me; my lately-towering hopes,
To the least fibre of their lowest root,
Are withered; thou no longer canst be mine,
I thine—the conscience-stricken must not woo
The unruffled Innocent,—I see thy face,
Behold thee, and my misery is complete!”

“One, are we not?” exclaimed the Maiden—“One,
For innocence and youth, for weal and woe?”

Then with the father's name she coupled words
 Of vehement indignation ; but the Youth
 Checked her with filial meekness ; for no thought
 Uncharitable crossed his mind, no sense
 Of hasty anger rising in the eclipse
 Of true domestic loyalty, did e'er
 Find place within his bosom.—Once again
 The persevering wedge of tyranny
 Achieved their separation : and once more
 Were they united,—to be yet again
 Disparted, pitiable lot ! But here
 A portion of the tale may well be left
 In silence, though my memory could add
 Much how the Youth, in scanty space of time,
 Was traversed from without ; much, too, of thoughts
 That occupied his days in solitude
 Under privation and restraint ; and what,
 Through dark and shapeless fear of things to come,
 And what, through strong compunction for the past,
 He suffered—breaking down in heart and mind !

Doomed to a third and last captivity,
 His freedom he recovered on the eve
 Of Julia's travail. When the babe was born,
 Its presence tempted him to cherish schemes
 Of future happiness. "You shall return,
 Julia," said he, "and to your father's house
 Go with the child.—You have been wretched ; yet
 The silver shower, whose reckless burthen weighs
 Too heavily upon the lily's head,
 Oft leaves a saving moisture at its root.
 Malice, beholding you, will melt away.
 Go !—'tis a town where both of us were born ;
 None will reproach you, for our truth is known ;
 And if, amid those once-bright bowers, our fate
 Remain unpitied, pity is not in man.
 With ornaments—the prettiest, nature yields
 Or art can fashion, shall you deck our boy,
 And feed his countenance with your own sweet looks
 Till no one can resist him.—Now, even now,
 I see him sporting on the sunny lawn ;
 My father from the window sees him too ;
 Startled, as if some new-created thing
 Enriched the earth, or Faery of the woods
 Bounded before him ;—but the unweething Child
 Shall by his beauty win his grandsire's heart
 So that it shall be softened, and our loves
 End happily, as they began !"

These gleams

Appeared but seldom ; oftener was he seen
 Propping a pale and melancholy face
 Upon the Mother's bosom ; resting thus
 His head upon one breast, while from the other
 The Babe was drawing in its quiet food.

—That pillow is no longer to be thine,
 Fond Youth ! that mournful solace now must pass
 Into the list of things that cannot be !
 Unwedded Julia, terror-smitten, hears
 The sentence, by her mother's lip pronounced,
 That dooms her to a convent.—Who shall tell,
 Who dares report, the tidings to the lord
 Of her affections ! so they blindly asked
 Who knew not to what quiet depths a weight
 Of agony had pressed the Sufferer down :
 The word, by others dreaded, he can hear
 Composed and silent, without visible sign
 Of even the least emotion. Noting this,
 When the impatient object of his love
 Upbraided him with slackness, he returned
 No answer, only took the mother's hand
 And kissed it ; seemingly devoid of pain,
 Or care, that what so tenderly he pressed,
 Was a dependant on the obdurate heart
 Of one who came to disunite their lives
 For ever—sad alternative ! preferred,
 By the unbending Parents of the Maid,
 To secret 'spousals meanly disavowed.
 —So be it !

In the city he remained
 A season after Julia had withdrawn
 To those religious walls. He, too, departs—
 Who with him ?—even the senseless Little-one.
 With that sole charge he passed the city-gates,
 For the last time, attendant by the side
 Of a close chair, a litter, or sedan,
 In which the Babe was carried. To a hill,
 That rose a brief league distant from the town,
 The dwellers in that house where he had lodged
 Accompanied his steps, by anxious love
 Impelled ;—they parted from him there, and stood
 Watching below till he had disappeared
 On the hill top. His eyes he scarcely took,
 Throughout that journey, from the vehicle
 (Slow-moving ark of all his hopes !) that veiled
 The tender infant : and at every inn,
 And under every hospitable tree
 At which the bearers halted or reposed,
 Laid him with timid care upon his knees,
 And looked, as mothers ne'er were known to look,
 Upon the nursling which his arms embraced.

This was the manner in which Vaudracour
 Departed with his infant ; and thus reached
 His father's house, where to the innocent child
 Admittance was denied. The young man spake
 No word of indignation or reproof,
 But of his father begged, a last request,
 That a retreat might be assigned to him

Where in forgotten quiet he might dwell,
 With such allowance as his wants required ;
 For wishes he had none. To a lodge that stood
 Deep in a forest, with leave given, at the age
 Of four-and-twenty summers he withdrew ;
 And thither took with him his motherless Babe,
 And one domestic for their common needs,
 An aged woman. It consoled him here
 To attend upon the orphan, and perform
 Obsequious service to the precious child,
 Which, after a short time, by some mistake
 Or indiscretion of the Father, died.—
 The Tale I follow to its last recess
 Of suffering or of peace, I know not which :
 Theirs be the blame who caused the woe, not mine!

From this time forth he never shared a smile
 With mortal creature. An Inhabitant
 Of that same town, in which the pair had left
 So lively a remembrance of their griefs,
 By chance of business, coming within reach
 Of his retirement, to the forest lodge
 Repaired, but only found the matron there,
 Who told him that his pains were thrown away,
 For that her Master never uttered word
 To living thing—not even to her.—Behold !
 While they were speaking, Vaudracour approached ;
 But, seeing some one near, as on the latch
 Of the garden-gate his hand was laid, he shrunk—
 And, like a shadow, glided out of view.
 Shocked at his savage aspect, from the place
 The visitor retired.

Thus lived the Youth
 Cut off from all intelligence with man,
 And shunning even the light of common day ;
 Nor could the voice of Freedom, which through
 France
 Full speedily resounded, public hope,
 Or personal memory of his own deep wrongs,
 Rouse him : but in those solitary shades
 His days he wasted, an imbecile mind !

1805.

XXXI.

THE IDIOT BOY.

'Tis eight o'clock,—a clear March night,
 The moon is up,—the sky is blue,
 The owlet, in the moonlight air,
 Shouts from nobody knows where ;
 He lengthens out his lonely shout,
 Halloo ! halloo ! a long halloo !

—Why bustle thus about your door,
 What means this bustle, Betty Foy ?
 Why are you in this mighty fret ?
 And why on horseback have you set
 Him whom you love, your Idiot Boy ?

Scarcely a soul is out of bed ;
 Good Betty, put him down again ;
 His lips with joy they burr at you ;
 But, Betty ! what has he to do
 With stirrup, saddle, or with rein ?

But Betty's bent on her intent ;
 For her good neighbour, Susan Gale,
 Old Susan, she who dwells alone,
 Is sick, and makes a piteous moan,
 As if her very life would fail.

There's not a house within a mile,
 No hand to help them in distress ;
 Old Susan lies a-bed in pain,
 And sorely puzzled are the twain,
 For what she ails they cannot guess.

And Betty's husband's at the wood,
 Where by the week he doth abide,
 A woodman in the distant vale ;
 There's none to help poor Susan Gale ;
 What must be done ? what will betide ?

And Betty from the lane has fetched
 Her Pony, that is mild and good ;
 Whether he be in joy or pain,
 Feeding at will along the lane,
 Or bringing faggots from the wood.

And he is all in travelling trim,—
 And, by the moonlight, Betty Foy
 Has on the well-girt saddle set
 (The like was never heard of yet)
 Him whom she loves, her Idiot Boy.

And he must post without delay
 Across the bridge and through the dale,
 And by the church, and o'er the down,
 To bring a Doctor from the town,
 Or she will die, old Susan Gale.

There is no need of boot or spur,
 There is no need of whip or wand ;
 For Johnny has his holly-bough,
 And with a *hurdy-burdy* now
 He shakes the green bough in his hand.

And Betty o'er and o'er has told
The Boy, who is her best delight,
Both what to follow, what to shun,
What do, and what to leave undone,
How turn to left, and how to right.

And Betty's most especial charge,
Was, "Johnny! Johnny! mind that you
Come home again, nor stop at all,—
Come home again, whate'er befall,
My Johnny, do, I pray you do."

To this did Johnny answer make,
Both with his head and with his hand,
And proudly shook the bridle too;
And then! his words were not a few,
Which Betty well could understand.

And now that Johnny is just going,
Though Betty's in a mighty flurry,
She gently pats the Pony's side,
On which her Idiot Boy must ride,
And seems no longer in a hurry.

But when the Pony moved his legs,
Oh! then for the poor Idiot Boy!
For joy he cannot hold the bridle,
For joy his head and heels are idle,
He's idle all for very joy.

And while the Pony moves his legs,
In Johnny's left hand you may see
The green bough motionless and dead:
The Moon that shines above his head
Is not more still and mute than he.

His heart it was so full of glee,
That till full fifty yards were gone,
He quite forgot his holly whip,
And all his skill in horsemanship:
Oh! happy, happy, happy John.

And while the Mother, at the door,
Stands fixed, her face with joy o'erflows,
Proud of herself, and proud of him,
She sees him in his travelling trim,
How quietly her Johnny goes.

The silence of her Idiot Boy,
What hopes it sends to Betty's heart!
He's at the guide-post—he turns right;
She watches till he's out of sight,
And Betty will not then depart.

Burr, burr—now Johnny's lips they burr,
As loud as any mill, or near it;
Meek as a lamb the Pony moves,
And Johnny makes the noise he loves,
And Betty listens, glad to hear it.

Away she hies to Susan Gale:
Her Messenger's in merry tune;
The owlets hoot, the owlets curr,
And Johnny's lips they burr, burr,
As on he goes beneath the moon.

His steed and he right well agree;
For of this Pony there's a rumour,
That, should he lose his eyes and ears,
And should he live a thousand years,
He never will be out of humour.

But then he is a horse that thinks!
And when he thinks, his pace is slack;
Now, though he knows poor Johnny well,
Yet, for his life, he cannot tell
What he has got upon his back.

So through the moonlight lanes they go,
And far into the moonlight dale,
And by the church, and o'er the down,
To bring a Doctor from the town,
To comfort poor old Susan Gale.

And Betty, now at Susan's side,
Is in the middle of her story,
What speedy help her Boy will bring,
With many a most diverting thing,
Of Johnny's wit, and Johnny's glory.

And Betty, still at Susan's side,
By this time is not quite so flurried:
Demure with porringer and plate
She sits, as if in Susan's fate
Her life and soul were buried.

But Betty, poor good woman! she,
You plainly in her face may read it,
Could lend out of that moment's store
Five years of happiness or more
To any that might need it.

But yet I guess that now and then
With Betty all was not so well;
And to the road she turns her ears,
And thence full many a sound she hears,
Which she to Susan will not tell.

Poor Susan moans, poor Susan groans ;
 "As sure as there's a moon in heaven,"
 Cries Betty, "he'll be back again ;
 They'll both be here—'tis almost ten—
 Both will be here before eleven."

Poor Susan moans, poor Susan groans ;
 The clock gives warning for eleven ;
 'Tis on the stroke—"He must be near,"
 Quoth Betty, "and will soon be here,
 As sure as there's a moon in heaven."

The clock is on the stroke of twelve,
 And Johnny is not yet in sight :
 —The Moon's in heaven, as Betty sees,
 But Betty is not quite at ease ;
 And Susan has a dreadful night.

And Betty, half an hour ago,
 On Johnny vile reflections cast :
 "A little idle sauntering Thing !"
 With other names, an endless string ;
 But now that time is gone and past.

And Betty's drooping at the heart,
 That happy time all past and gone,
 "How can it be he is so late ?
 The Doctor, he has made him wait ;
 Susan ! they'll both be here anon."

And Susan's growing worse and worse,
 And Betty's in a sad *quandary* ;
 And then there's nobody to say
 If she must go, or she must stay !
 —She's in a sad *quandary*.

The clock is on the stroke of one ;
 But neither Doctor nor his Guide
 Appears along the moonlight road ;
 There's neither horse nor man abroad,
 And Betty's still at Susan's side.

And Susan now begins to fear
 Of sad mischances not a few,
 That Johnny may perhaps be drowned ;
 Or lost, perhaps, and never found ;
 Which they must both for ever rue.

She prefaced half a hint of this
 With, "God forbid it should be true !"
 At the first word that Susan said
 Cried Betty, rising from the bed,
 "Susan, I'd gladly stay with you.

I must be gone, I must away :
 Consider, Johnny's but half-wise ;
 Susan, we must take care of him,
 If he is hurt in life or limb"—
 "Oh God forbid !" poor Susan cries.

"What can I do ?" says Betty, going,
 "What can I do to ease your pain ?
 Good Susan tell me, and I'll stay ;
 I fear you're in a dreadful way,
 But I shall soon be back again."

"Nay, Betty, go ! good Betty, go !
 There's nothing that can ease my pain."
 Then off she hies ; but with a prayer
 That God poor Susan's life would spare,
 Till she comes back again.

So, through the moonlight lane she goes,
 And far into the moonlight dale ;
 And how she ran, and how she walked,
 And all that to herself she talked,
 Would surely be a tedious tale.

In high and low, above, below,
 In great and small, in round and square,
 In tree and tower was Johnny seen,
 In bush and brake, in black and green ;
 'Twas Johnny, Johnny, every where.

And while she crossed the bridge, there came
 A thought with which her heart is sore—
 Johnny perhaps his horse forsook,
 To hunt the moon within the brook,
 And never will be heard of more.

Now is she high upon the down,
 Alone amid a prospect wide ;
 There's neither Johnny nor his Horse
 Among the fern or in the gorse ;
 There's neither Doctor nor his Guide.

"Oh saints ! what is become of him ?
 Perhaps he's climbed into an oak,
 Where he will stay till he is dead ;
 Or, sadly he has been misled,
 And joined the wandering gipsy-folk.

Or him that wicked Pony's carried
 To the dark cave, the goblin's hall ;
 Or in the castle he's pursuing
 Among the ghosts his own undoing ;
 Or playing with the waterfall."

At poor old Susan then she railed,
While to the town she posts away ;
"If Susan had not been so ill,
Alas! I should have had him still,
My Johnny, till my dying day."

Poor Betty, in this sad distemper,
The Doctor's self could hardly spare :
Unworthy things she talked, and wild ;
Even he, of cattle the most mild,
The Pony had his share.

But now she 's fairly in the town,
And to the Doctor's door she hies ;
'Tis silence all on every side ;
The town so long, the town so wide,
Is silent as the skies.

And now she 's at the Doctor's door,
She lifts the knocker, rap, rap, rap ;
The Doctor at the casement shows
His glimmering eyes that peep and doze !
And one hand rubs his old night-cap.

"Oh Doctor! Doctor! where's my Johnny?"
"I'm here, what is 't you want with me?"
"Oh Sir! you know I'm Betty Foy,
And I have lost my poor dear Boy,
You know him—him you often see ;

He's not so wise as some folks be :"
"The devil take his wisdom!" said
The Doctor, looking somewhat grim,
"What, Woman! should I know of him?"
And, grumbling, he went back to bed!

"O woe is me! O woe is me!
Here will I die; here will I die;
I thought to find my lost one here,
But he is neither far nor near,
Oh! what a wretched Mother I!"

She stops, she stands, she looks about;
Which way to turn she cannot tell.
Poor Betty! it would ease her pain
If she had heart to knock again;
—The clock strikes three—a dismal knell!

Then up along the town she hies,
No wonder if her senses fail;
This piteous news so much it shocked her,
She quite forgot to send the Doctor,
To comfort poor old Susan Gale.

And now she's high upon the down,
And she can see a mile of road:
"O cruel! I'm almost threescore;
Such night as this was ne'er before,
There 's not a single soul abroad."

She listens, but she cannot hear
The foot of horse, the voice of man;
The streams with softest sound are flowing,
The grass you almost hear it growing,
You hear it now, if e'er you can.

The owlets through the long blue night
Are shouting to each other still:
Fond lovers! yet not quite hob nob,
They lengthen out the tremulous sob,
That echoes far from hill to hill.

Poor Betty now has lost all hope,
Her thoughts are bent on deadly sin,
A green-grown pond she just has past,
And from the brink she hurries fast,
Lest she should drown herself therein.

And now she sits her down and weeps;
Such tears she never shed before;
"Oh dear, dear Pony! my sweet joy!
Oh carry back my Idiot Boy!
And we will ne'er o'erload thee more."

A thought is come into her head:
The Pony he is mild and good,
And we have always used him well;
Perhaps he's gone along the dell,
And carried Johnny to the wood.

Then up she springs as if on wings;
She thinks no more of deadly sin;
If Betty fifty ponds should see,
The last of all her thoughts would be
To drown herself therein.

O Reader! now that I might tell
What Johnny and his Horse are doing!
What they've been doing all this time,
Oh could I put it into rhyme,
A most delightful tale pursuing!

Perhaps, and no unlikely thought!
He with his Pony now doth roam
The cliffs and peaks so high that are,
To lay his hands upon a star,
And in his pocket bring it home.

Perhaps he's turned himself about,
His face unto his horse's tail,
And, still and mute, in wonder lost,
All silent as a horseman-ghost,
He travels slowly down the vale.

And now, perhaps, is hunting sheep,
A fierce and dreadful hunter he ;
Yon valley, now so trim and green,
In five months' time, should he be seen,
A desert wilderness will be !

Perhaps, with head and heels on fire,
And like the very soul of evil,
He's galloping away, away,
And so will gallop on for aye,
The bane of all that dread the devil !

I to the Muses have been bound
These fourteen years, by strong indentures :
O gentle Muses ! let me tell
But half of what to him befel ;
He surely met with strange adventures.

O gentle Muses ! is this kind ?
Why will ye thus my suit repel ?
Why of your further aid bereave me ?
And can ye thus unfriended leave me ;
Ye Muses ! whom I love so well ?

Who's yon, that, near the waterfall,
Which thunders down with headlong force,
Beneath the moon, yet shining fair,
As careless as if nothing were,
Sits upright on a feeding horse ?

Unto his horse—there feeding free,
He seems, I think, the rein to give ;
Of moon or stars he takes no heed ;
Of such we in romances read :
—'Tis Johnny ! Johnny ! as I live.

And that's the very Pony, too !
Where is she, where is Betty Foy ?
She hardly can sustain her fears ;
The roaring waterfall she hears,
And cannot find her Idiot Boy.

Your Pony's worth his weight in gold :
Then calm your terrors, Betty Foy !
She's coming from among the trees,
And now all full in view she sees
Him whom she loves, her Idiot Boy.

And Betty sees the Pony too :
Why stand you thus, good Betty Foy ?
It is no goblin, 'tis no ghost,
'Tis he whom you so long have lost,
He whom you love, your Idiot Boy.

She looks again—her arms are up—
She screams—she cannot move for joy ;
She darts, as with a torrent's force,
She almost has o'erturned the Horse,
And fast she holds her Idiot Boy.

And Johnny burrs, and laughs aloud ;
Whether in cunning or in joy
I cannot tell ; but while he laughs,
Betty a drunken pleasure quaffs
To hear again her Idiot Boy.

And now she's at the Pony's tail,
And now is at the Pony's head,—
On that side now, and now on this ;
And, almost stifled with her bliss,
A few sad tears does Betty shed.

She kisses o'er and o'er again
Him whom she loves, her Idiot Boy ;
She's happy here, is happy there,
She is uneasy every where ;
Her limbs are all alive with joy.

She pats the Pony, where or when
She knows not, happy Betty Foy !
The little Pony glad may be,
But he is milder far than she,
You hardly can perceive his joy.

"Oh ! Johnny, never mind the Doctor ;
You've done your best, and that is all :"
She took the reins, when this was said,
And gently turned the Pony's head
From the loud waterfall.

By this the stars were almost gone,
The moon was setting on the hill,
So pale you scarcely looked at her :
The little birds began to stir,
Though yet their tongues were still.

The Pony, Betty, and her Boy,
Wind slowly through the woody dale ;
And who is she, betimes abroad,
That hobbles up the steep rough road ?
Who is it, but old Susan Gale ?

Long time lay Susan lost in thought;
And many dreadful fears beset her,
Both for her Messenger and Nurse ;
And, as her mind grew worse and worse,
Her body—it grew better.

She turned, she tossed herself in bed,
On all sides doubts and terrors met her ;
Point after point did she discuss ;
And, while her mind was fighting thus,
Her body still grew better.

"Alas! what is become of them?
These fears can never be endured ;
I'll to the wood."—The word scarce said,
Did Susan rise up from her bed,
As if by magic cured.

Away she goes up hill and down,
And to the wood at length is come ;
She spies her Friends, she shouts a greeting ;
Oh me! it is a merry meeting
As ever was in Christendom.

The owls have hardly sung their last,
While our four travellers homeward wend ;
The owls have hooted all night long,
And with the owls began my song,
And with the owls must end.

For while they all were travelling home,
Cried Betty, "Tell us, Johnny, do,
Where all this long night you have been,
What you have heard, what you have seen :
And, Johnny, mind you tell us true."

Now Johnny all night long had heard
The owls in tuneful concert strive ;
No doubt too he the moon had seen ;
For in the moonlight he had been
From eight o'clock till five.

And thus, to Betty's question, he
Made answer, like a traveller bold,
(His very words I give to you),
"The cocks did crow to-whoo, to-whoo,
And the sun did shine so cold!"
—Thus answered Johnny in his glory,
And that was all his travel's story.

XXXII.

MICHAEL.

A PASTORAL POEM.

If from the public way you turn your steps
Up the tumultuous brook of Green-head Ghyll,
You will suppose that with an upright path
Your feet must struggle ; in such bold ascent
The pastoral mountains front you, face to face.
But, courage! for around that boisterous brook
The mountains have all opened out themselves,
And made a hidden valley of their own.
No habitation can be seen ; but they
Who journey thither find themselves alone
With a few sheep, with rocks and stones, and kites
That overhead are sailing in the sky.
It is in truth an utter solitude ;
Nor should I have made mention of this Dell
But for one object which you might pass by,
Might see and notice not. Beside the brook
Appears a straggling heap of unhewn stones!
And to that simple object appertains
A story—unenriched with strange events,
Yet not unfit, I deem, for the fireside,
Or for the summer shade. It was the first
Of those domestic tales that spake to me
Of Shepherds, dwellers in the valleys, men
Whom I already loved ;—not verily
For their own sakes, but for the fields and hills
Where was their occupation and abode.
And hence this Tale, while I was yet a Boy
Careless of books, yet having felt the power
Of Nature, by the gentle agency
Of natural objects, led me on to feel
For passions that were not my own, and think
(At random and imperfectly indeed)
On man, the heart of man, and human life.
Therefore, although it be a history
Homely and rude, I will relate the same
For the delight of a few natural hearts ;
And, with yet fonder feeling, for the sake
Of youthful Poets, who among these hills
Will be my second self when I am gone.

Upon the forest-side in Grasmere Vale
There dwelt a Shepherd, Michael was his name ;
An old man, stout of heart, and strong of limb.
His bodily frame had been from youth to age
Of an unusual strength : his mind was keen,
Intense, and frugal, apt for all affairs,
And in his shepherd's calling he was prompt
And watchful more than ordinary men.

Hence had he learned the meaning of all winds,
 Of blasts of every tone ; and, oftentimes,
 When others heeded not, He heard the South
 Make subterraneous music, like the noise
 Of bagpipers on distant Highland hills.
 The Shepherd, at such warning, of his flock
 Bethought him, and he to himself would say,
 'The winds are now devising work for me !'
 And, truly, at all times, the storm, that drives
 The traveller to a shelter, summoned him
 Up to the mountains : he had been alone
 Amid the heart of many thousand mists,
 That came to him, and left him, on the heights.
 So lived he till his eightieth year was past.
 And grossly that man errs, who should suppose
 That the green valleys, and the streams and rocks,
 Were things indifferent to the Shepherd's thoughts.
 Fields, where with cheerful spirits he had breathed
 The common air ; hills, which with vigorous step
 He had so often climbed ; which had impressed
 So many incidents upon his mind
 Of hardship, skill or courage, joy or fear ;
 Which, like a book, preserved the memory
 Of the dumb animals, whom he had saved,
 Had fed or sheltered, linking to such acts
 The certainty of honourable gain ;
 Those fields, those hills—what could they less ?
 had laid
 Strong hold on his affections, were to him
 A pleasurable feeling of blind love,
 The pleasure which there is in life itself.

His days had not been passed in singleness.
 His Helpmate was a comely matron, old—
 Though younger than himself full twenty years.
 She was a woman of a stirring life,
 Whose heart was in her house : two wheels she had
 Of antique form ; this large, for spinning wool ;
 That small, for flax ; and if one wheel had rest
 It was because the other was at work.
 The Pair had but one inmate in their house,
 An only Child, who had been born to them
 When Michael, telling o'er his years, began
 To deem that he was old,—in shepherd's phrase,
 With one foot in the grave. This only Son,
 With two brave sheep-dogs tried in many a storm,
 The one of an inestimable worth,
 Made all their household. I may truly say,
 That they were as a proverb in the vale
 For endless industry. When day was gone,
 And from their occupations out of doors
 The Son and Father were come home, even then,
 Their labour did not cease ; unless when all
 Turned to the cleanly supper-board, and there,

Each with a mess of pottage and skimmed milk,
 Sat round the basket piled with oaten cakes,
 And their plain home-made cheese. Yet when
 the meal

Was ended, Luke (for so the Son was named)
 And his old Father both betook themselves
 To such convenient work as might employ
 Their hands by the fire-side ; perhaps to card
 Wool for the Housewife's spindle, or repair
 Some injury done to sickle, flail, or scythe,
 Or other implement of house or field.

Down from the ceiling, by the chimney's edge,
 That in our ancient uncouth country style
 With huge and black projection overbrowed
 Large space beneath, as duly as the light
 Of day grew dim the Housewife hung a lamp ;
 An aged utensil, which had performed
 Service beyond all others of its kind.
 Early at evening did it burn—and late,
 Surviving comrade of uncounted hours,
 Which, going by from year to year, had found,
 And left the couple neither gay perhaps
 Nor cheerful, yet with objects and with hopes,
 Living a life of eager industry.
 And now, when Luke had reached his eighteenth
 year,

There by the light of this old lamp they sate,
 Father and Son, while far into the night
 The Housewife plied her own peculiar work,
 Making the cottage through the silent hours
 Murmur as with the sound of summer flies.
 This light was famous in its neighbourhood,
 And was a public symbol of the life
 That thrifty Pair had lived. For, as it chanced,
 Their cottage on a plot of rising ground
 Stood single, with large prospect, north and south,
 High into Easedale, up to Dunmail-Raise,
 And westward to the village near the lake ;
 And from this constant light, so regular
 And so far seen, the House itself, by all
 Who dwelt within the limits of the vale,
 Both old and young, was named THE EVENING STAR.

Thus living on through such a length of years,
 The Shepherd, if he loved himself, must needs
 Have loved his Helpmate ; but to Michael's heart
 This son of his old age was yet more dear—
 Less from instinctive tenderness, the same
 Fond spirit that blindly works in the blood of all—
 Than that a child, more than all other gifts
 That earth can offer to declining man,
 Brings hope with it, and forward-looking thoughts,
 And stirrings of inquietude, when they

By tendency of nature needs must fail.
Exceeding was the love he bare to him,
His heart and his heart's joy ! For oftentimes
Old Michael, while he was a babe in arms,
Had done him female service, not alone
For pastime and delight, as is the use
Of fathers, but with patient mind enforced
To acts of tenderness ; and he had rocked
His cradle, as with a woman's gentle hand.

And, in a later time, ere yet the Boy
Had put on boy's attire, did Michael love,
Albeit of a stern unbending mind,
To have the Young-one in his sight, when he
Wrought in the field, or on his shepherd's stool
Sate with a fettered sheep before him stretched
Under the large old oak, that near his door
Stood single, and, from matchless depth of shade,
Chosen for the Shearer's covert from the sun,
Thence in our rustic dialect was called
The CLIPPING TREE *, a name which yet it bears.
There, while they two were sitting in the shade,
With others round them, earnest all and blithe,
Would Michael exercise his heart with looks
Of fond correction and reproof bestowed
Upon the Child, if he disturbed the sheep
By catching at their legs, or with his shouts
Scared them, while they lay still beneath the shears.

And when by Heaven's good grace the boy grew up
A healthy Lad, and carried in his cheek
Two steady roses that were five years old ;
Then Michael from a winter coppice cut
With his own hand a sapling, which he hooped
With iron, making it throughout in all
Due requisites a perfect shepherd's staff,
And gave it to the Boy ; wherewith equipt
He as a watchman oftentimes was placed
At gate or gap, to stem or turn the flock ;
And, to his office prematurely called,
There stood the urchin, as you will divine,
Something between a hindrance and a help ;
And for this cause not always, I believe,
Receiving from his Father hire of praise ;
Though nought was left undone which staff, or
voice,
Or looks, or threatening gestures, could perform.

But soon as Luke, full ten years old, could stand
Against the mountain blasts ; and to the heights,
Not fearing toil, nor length of weary ways,

* Clipping is the word used in the North of England for shearing.

He with his Father daily went, and they
Were as companions, why should I relate
That objects which the Shepherd loved before
Were dearer now ? that from the Boy there came
Feelings and emanations—things which were
Light to the sun and music to the wind ;
And that the old Man's heart seemed born again !

Thus in his Father's sight the Boy grew up :
And now, when he had reached his eighteenth year,
He was his comfort and his daily hope.

While in this sort the simple household lived
From day to day, to Michael's ear there came
Distressful tidings. Long before the time
Of which I speak, the Shepherd had been bound
In surety for his brother's son, a man
Of an industrious life, and ample means ;
But unforeseen misfortunes suddenly
Had prest upon him ; and old Michael now
Was summoned to discharge the forfeiture,
A grievous penalty, but little less
Than half his substance. This unlooked-for claim,
At the first hearing, for a moment took
More hope out of his life than he supposed
That any old man ever could have lost.
As soon as he had armed himself with strength
To look his trouble in the face, it seemed
The Shepherd's sole resource to sell at once
A portion of his patrimonial fields.
Such was his first resolve ; he thought again,
And his heart failed him. " Isabel," said he,
Two evenings after he had heard the news,
" I have been toiling more than seventy years,
And in the open sunshine of God's love
Have we all lived ; yet if these fields of ours
Should pass into a stranger's hand, I think
That I could not lie quiet in my grave.
Our lot is a hard lot ; the sun himself
Has scarcely been more diligent than I ;
And I have lived to be a fool at last
To my own family. An evil man
That was, and made an evil choice, if he
Were false to us ; and if he were not false,
There are ten thousand to whom loss like this
Had been no sorrow. I forgive him ;—but
'Twere better to be dumb than to talk thus.

When I began, my purpose was to speak
Of remedies and of a cheerful hope.
Our Luke shall leave us, Isabel ; the land
Shall not go from us, and it shall be free ;
He shall possess it, free as is the wind
That passes over it. We have, thou know'st,

Another kinsman—he will be our friend
 In this distress. He is a prosperous man,
 Thriving in trade—and Luke to him shall go,
 And with his kinsman's help and his own thrift
 He quickly will repair this loss, and then
 He may return to us. If here he stay,
 What can be done? Where every one is poor,
 What can be gained?"

At this the old Man paused,
 And Isabel sat silent, for her mind
 Was busy, looking back into past times.
 There's Richard Bateman, thought she to herself,
 He was a parish-boy—at the church-door
 They made a gathering for him, shillings, pence
 And halfpennies, wherewith the neighbours bought
 A basket, which they filled with pedlar's wares;
 And, with this basket on his arm, the lad
 Went up to London, found a master there,
 Who, out of many, chose the trusty boy
 To go and overlook his merchandise
 Beyond the seas; where he grew wondrous rich,
 And left estates and monies to the poor,
 And, at his birth-place, built a chapel floored
 With marble, which he sent from foreign lands.
 These thoughts, and many others of like sort,
 Passed quickly through the mind of Isabel,
 And her face brightened. The old Man was glad,
 And thus resumed:—"Well, Isabel! this scheme
 These two days, has been meat and drink to me.
 Far more than we have lost is left us yet.
 —We have enough—I wish indeed that I
 Were younger;—but this hope is a good hope.
 —Make ready Luke's best garments, of the best
 Buy for him more, and let us send him forth
 To-morrow, or the next day, or to-night:
 —If he *could* go, the Boy should go to-night."

Here Michael ceased, and to the fields went forth
 With a light heart. The Housewife for five days
 Was restless morn and night, and all day long
 Wrought on with her best fingers to prepare
 Things needful for the journey of her son.
 But Isabel was glad when Sunday came
 To stop her in her work: for, when she lay
 By Michael's side, she through the last two nights
 Heard him, how he was troubled in his sleep:
 And when they rose at morning she could see
 That all his hopes were gone. That day at noon
 She said to Luke, while they two by themselves
 Were sitting at the door, "Thou must not go:
 We have no other Child but thee to lose,
 None to remember—do not go away,
 For if thou leave thy Father he will die."
 The Youth made answer with a jocund voice;

And Isabel, when she had told her fears,
 Recovered heart. That evening her best fare
 Did she bring forth, and all together sat
 Like happy people round a Christmas fire.

With daylight Isabel resumed her work;
 And all the ensuing week the house appeared
 As cheerful as a grove in Spring: at length
 The expected letter from their kinsman came,
 With kind assurances that he would do
 His utmost for the welfare of the Boy;
 To which, requests were added, that forthwith
 He might be sent to him. Ten times or more
 The letter was read over; Isabel
 Went forth to show it to the neighbours round;
 Nor was there at that time on English land
 A prouder heart than Luke's. When Isabel
 Had to her house returned, the old Man said,
 "He shall depart to-morrow." To this word
 The Housewife answered, talking much of things
 Which, if at such short notice he should go,
 Would surely be forgotten. But at length
 She gave consent, and Michael was at ease.

Near the tumultuous brook of Green-head Ghyll,
 In that deep valley, Michael had designed
 To build a Sheep-fold; and, before he heard
 The tidings of his melancholy loss,
 For this same purpose he had gathered up
 A heap of stones, which by the streamlet's edge
 Lay thrown together, ready for the work.
 With Luke that evening thitherward he walked:
 And soon as they had reached the place he stopped,
 And thus the old Man spake to him:—"My Son,
 To-morrow thou wilt leave me: with full heart
 I look upon thee, for thou art the same
 That wert a promise to me ere thy birth,
 And all thy life hast been my daily joy.
 I will relate to thee some little part
 Of our two histories; 'twill do thee good
 When thou art from me, even if I should touch
 On things thou canst not know of.—After thou
 First cam'st into the world—as oft befalls
 To new-born infants—thou didst sleep away
 Two days, and blessings from thy Father's tongue
 Then fell upon thee. Day by day passed on,
 And still I loved thee with increasing love.
 Never to living ear came sweeter sounds
 Than when I heard thee by our own fire-side
 First uttering, without words, a natural tone;
 While thou, a feeding babe, didst in thy joy
 Sing at thy Mother's breast. Month followed month,
 And in the open fields my life was passed
 And on the mountains; else I think that thou

Hadst been brought up upon thy Father's knees.
 But we were playmates, Luke : among these hills,
 As well thou knowest, in us the old and young
 Have played together, nor with me didst thou
 Lack any pleasure which a boy can know."
 Luke had a manly heart ; but at these words
 He sobbed aloud. The old Man grasped his hand,
 And said, "Nay, do not take it so—I see
 That these are things of which I need not speak.
 —Even to the utmost I have been to thee
 A kind and a good Father : and herein
 I but repay a gift which I myself
 Received at others' hands ; for, though now old
 Beyond the common life of man, I still
 Remember them who loved me in my youth.
 Both of them sleep together : here they lived,
 As all their Forefathers had done ; and when
 At length their time was come, they were not loth
 To give their bodies to the family mould.
 I wished that thou shouldst live the life they lived :
 But, 'tis a long time to look back, my Son,
 And see so little gain from threescore years.
 These fields were burthened when they came to me ;
 Till I was forty years of age, not more
 Than half of my inheritance was mine.
 I toiled and toiled ; God blessed me in my work,
 And till these three weeks past the land was free.
 —It looks as if it never could endure
 Another Master. Heaven forgive me, Luke,
 If I judge ill for thee, but it seems good
 That thou should'st go."

At this the old Man paused ;
 Then, pointing to the stones near which they stood,
 Thus, after a short silence, he resumed :
 "This was a work for us ; and now, my Son,
 It is a work for me. But, lay one stone—
 Here, lay it for me, Luke, with thine own hands.
 Nay, Boy, be of good hope ;—we both may live
 To see a better day. At eighty-four
 I still am strong and hale ;—do thou thy part ;
 I will do mine.—I will begin again
 With many tasks that were resigned to thee :
 Up to the heights, and in among the storms,
 Will I without thee go again, and do
 All works which I was wont to do alone,
 Before I knew thy face.—Heaven bless thee, Boy !
 Thy heart these two weeks has been beating fast
 With many hopes ; it should be so—yes—yes—
 I knew that thou could'st never have a wish
 To leave me, Luke : thou hast been bound to me
 Only by links of love : when thou art gone,
 What will be left to us !—But, I forget
 My purposes. Lay now the corner-stone,
 As I requested ; and hereafter, Luke,

When thou art gone away, should evil men
 Be thy companions, think of me, my Son,
 And of this moment ; hither turn thy thoughts,
 And God will strengthen thee : amid all fear
 And all temptation, Luke, I pray that thou
 May'st bear in mind the life thy Fathers lived,
 Who, being innocent, did for that cause
 Bestir them in good deeds. Now, fare thee well—
 When thou return'st, thou in this place wilt see
 A work which is not here : a covenant
 'Twill be between us ; but, whatever fate
 Befal thee, I shall love thee to the last,
 And bear thy memory with me to the grave."

The Shepherd ended here ; and Luke stooped
 down,
 And, as his Father had requested, laid
 The first stone of the Sheep-fold. At the sight
 The old Man's grief broke from him ; to his heart
 He pressed his Son, he kissed him and wept ;
 And to the house together they returned.
 —Hushed was that House in peace, or seeming
 peace,
 Ere the night fell :—with morrow's dawn the Boy
 Began his journey, and when he had reached
 The public way, he put on a bold face ;
 And all the neighbours, as he passed their doors,
 Came forth with wishes and with farewell prayers,
 That followed him till he was out of sight.

A good report did from their Kinsman come,
 Of Luke and his well-doing : and the Boy
 Wrote loving letters, full of wondrous news,
 Which, as the Housewife phrased it, were throughout
 'The prettiest letters that were ever seen.'
 Both parents read them with rejoicing hearts.
 So, many months passed on : and once again
 The Shepherd went about his daily work
 With confident and cheerful thoughts ; and now
 Sometimes when he could find a leisure hour
 He to that valley took his way, and there
 Wrought at the Sheep-fold. Meantime Luke began
 To slacken in his duty ; and, at length,
 He in the dissolute city gave himself
 To evil courses : ignominy and shame
 Fell on him, so that he was driven at last
 To seek a hiding-place beyond the seas.

There is a comfort in the strength of love ;
 'Twill make a thing endurable, which else
 Would overset the brain, or break the heart :
 I have conversed with more than one who well
 Remember the old Man, and what he was
 Years after he had heard this heavy news.

His bodily frame had been from youth to age
Of an unusual strength. Among the rocks
He went, and still looked up to sun and cloud,
And listened to the wind; and, as before,
Performed all kinds of labour for his sheep,
And for the land, his small inheritance.
And to that hollow dell from time to time
Did he repair, to build the Fold of which
His flock had need. 'Tis not forgotten yet
The pity which was then in every heart
For the old Man—and 'tis believed by all
That many and many a day he thither went,
And never lifted up a single stone.

There, by the Sheep-fold, sometimes was he
seen

Sitting alone, or with his faithful Dog,
Then old, beside him, lying at his feet.
The length of full seven years, from time to time,
He at the building of this Sheep-fold wrought,
And left the work unfinished when he died.
Three years, or little more, did Isabel
Survive her Husband: at her death the estate
Was sold, and went into a stranger's hand.
The Cottage which was named the EVENING STAR
Is gone—the ploughshare has been through the
ground
On which it stood; great changes have been wrought
In all the neighbourhood:—yet the oak is left
That grew beside their door; and the remains
Of the unfinished Sheep-fold may be seen
Beside the boisterous brook of Green-head Ghyll.

1800.

XXXIII.

THE WIDOW ON WINDERMERE SIDE.

I.

How beautiful when up a lofty height
Honour ascends among the humblest poor,
And feeling sinks as deep! See there the door
Of One, a Widow, left beneath a weight
Of blameless debt. On evil Fortune's spite
She wasted no complaint, but strove to make
A just repayment, both for conscience-sake
And that herself and hers should stand upright
In the world's eye. Her work when daylight failed
Paused not, and through the depth of night she kept
Such earnest vigils, that belief prevailed
With one, the noble Creature never slept;
But, by one, the hand of death assailed
Her children from her inmost heart bewept.

II.

The Mother mourned, nor ceased her tears to flow,
Till a winter's noon-day placed her buried Son
Before her eyes, last child of many gone—
His raiment of angelic white, and lo!
His very feet bright as the dazzling snow
Which they are touching; yea far brighter, even
As that which comes, or seems to come, from heaven,
Surpasses aught these elements can show.
Much she rejoiced, trusting that from that hour
Whate'er befel she could not grieve or pine;
But the Transfigured, in and out of season,
Appeared, and spiritual presence gained a power
Over material forms that mastered reason.
Oh, gracious Heaven, in pity make her thine!

III.

But why that prayer? as if to her could come
No good but by the way that leads to bliss
Through Death,—so judging we should judge amiss.
Since reason failed want is her threatened doom,
Yet frequent transports mitigate the gloom:
Nor of those maniacs is she one that kiss
The air or laugh upon a precipice;
No, passing through strange sufferings toward the
tomb
She smiles as if a martyr's crown were won:
Often, when light breaks through clouds or waving
trees,
With outspread arms and fallen upon her knees
The Mother hails in her descending Son
An Angel, and in earthly ecstasies
Her own angelic glory seems begun.

XXXIV.

THE ARMENIAN LADY'S LOVE.

[The subject of the following poem is from the *Orlandus* of the author's friend, Kenelm Henry Digby: and the liberty is taken of inscribing it to him as an acknowledgment, however unworthy, of pleasure and instruction derived from his numerous and valuable writings, illustrative of the piety and chivalry of the olden time.]

I.

You have heard 'a Spanish Lady
How she wooed an English man*;
Hear now of a fair Armenian,
Daughter of the proud Soldan;
How she loved a Christian Slave, and told her pain
By word, look, deed, with hope that he might love
again.

* See, in Percy's *Reliques*, that fine old ballad, "The Spanish Lady's Love;" from which Poem the form of stanza, as suitable to dialogue, is adopted.

II.

"Pluck that rose, it moves my liking,"
Said she, lifting up her veil;
"Pluck it for me, gentle gardener,
Ere it wither and grow pale."

"Princess fair, I till the ground, but may not take
From twig or bed an humbler flower, even for
your sake!"

III.

"Grieved am I, submissive Christian!
To behold thy captive state;
Women, in your land, may pity
(May they not?) the unfortunate."

"Yes, kind Lady! otherwise man could not bear
Life, which to every one that breathes is full of
care."

IV.

"Worse than idle is compassion
If it end in tears and sighs;
Thee from bondage would I rescue
And from vile indignities;

Nurtured, as thy mien bespeaks, in high degree,
Look up—and help a hand that longs to set thee
free."

V.

"Lady! dread the wish, nor venture
In such peril to engage;
Think how it would stir against you
Your most loving father's rage:

Sad deliverance would it be, and yoked with shame,
Should troubles overflow on her from whom it
came."

VI.

"Generous Frank! the just in effort
Are of inward peace secure:
Hardships for the brave encountered,
Even the feeblest may endure:

If almighty grace through me thy chains unbind
My father for slave's work may seek a slave in
mind."

VII.

"Princess, at this burst of goodness,
My long-frozen heart grows warm!"
"Yet you make all courage fruitless,
Me to save from chance of harm:

Leading such companion I that gilded dome,
Yon minarets, would gladly leave for his worst
home."

VIII.

"Feeling tunes your voice, fair Princess!
And your brow is free from scorn,
Else these words would come like mockery,
Sharper than the pointed thorn."

"Whence the undeserved mistrust? Too wide apart
Our faith hath been,—O would that eyes could see
the heart!"

IX.

"Tempt me not, I pray; my doom is
These base implements to wield;
Rusty lance, I ne'er shall grasp thee,
Ne'er assail my cobwebb'd shield!

Never see my native land, nor castle towers,
Nor Her who thinking of me there counts widowed
hours."

X.

"Prisoner! pardon youthful fancies;
Wedded? If you *can*, say no!
Blessed is and be your consort;
Hopes I cherished—let them go!

Handmaid's privilege would leave my purpose free,
Without another link to my felicity."

XI.

"Wedded love with loyal Christians,
Lady, is a mystery rare;
Body, heart, and soul in union,
Make one being of a pair."

"Humble love in me would look for no return,
Soft as a guiding star that cheers, but cannot burn."

XII.

"Gracious Allah! by such title
Do I dare to thank the God,
Him who thus exalts thy spirit,
Flower of an unchristian sod!

Or hast thou put off wings which thou in heaven
dost wear?

What have I seen, and heard, or dreamt? where
am I? where?"

XIII.

Here broke off the dangerous converse:
Less impassioned words might tell
How the pair escaped together,
Tears not wanting, nor a knell

Of sorrow in her heart while through her father's
door,
And from her narrow world, she passed for ever—
more.

XIV

But affections higher, holier,
 Urged her steps ; she shrunk from trust
 In a sensual creed that trampled
 Woman's birthright into dust.

Little be the wonder then, the blame be none,
 If she, a timid Maid, hath put such boldness on.

XV.

Judge both Fugitives with knowledge :
 In those old romantic days
 Mighty were the soul's commandments
 To support, restrain, or raise.

Foes might hang upon their path, snakes rustle
 near,

But nothing from their inward selves had they to
 fear.

XVI.

Thought infirm ne'er came between them,
 Whether printing desert sands

With accordant steps, or gathering
 Forest-fruit with social hands ;

Or whispering like two reeds that in the cold moon-
 beam

Bend with the breeze their heads, beside a crystal
 stream.

XVII.

On a friendly deck reposing

They at length for Venice steer ;

There, when they had closed their voyage,

One, who daily on the pier

Watched for tidings from the East, beheld his Lord,
 Fell down and clasped his knees for joy, not
 uttering word.

XVIII.

Mutual was the sudden transport ;
 Breathless questions followed fast,
 Years contracting to a moment,
 Each word greedier than the last ;

"Hie thee to the Countess, friend ! return with
 speed,

And of this Stranger speak by whom her lord was
 freed.

XIX.

Say that I, who might have languished,
 Drooped and pined till life was spent,

Now before the gates of Stolberg

My Deliverer would present

For a crowning recompense, the precious grace
 Of her who in my heart still holds her ancient
 place.

XX.

Make it known that my Companion
 Is of royal eastern blood,

Thirsting after all perfection,

Innocent, and meek, and good,

Though with misbelievers bred ; but that dark
 night

Will holy Church disperse by beams of gospel-
 light."

XXI.

Swiftly went that grey-haired Servant,
 Soon returned a trusty Page

Charged with greetings, benedictions,
 Thanks and praises, each a gage

For a sunny thought to cheer the Stranger's way,
 Her virtuous scruples to remove, her fears allay.

XXII.

And how blest the Reunited,

While beneath their castle-walls,

Runs a deafening noise of welcome !—

Blest, though every tear that falls

Doth in its silence of past sorrow tell,
 And makes a meeting seem most like a dear farewell.

XXIII.

Through a haze of human nature,

Glorified by heavenly light,

Looked the beautiful Deliverer

On that overpowering sight,

While across her virgin cheek pure blushes strayed,
 For every tender sacrifice her heart had made.

XXIV.

On the ground the weeping Countess

Knelt, and kissed the Stranger's hand ;

Act of soul-devoted homage,

Pledge of an eternal band :

Nor did aught of future days that kiss belie,
 Which, with a generous shout, the crowd did ratify.

XXV.

Constant to the fair Armenian,

Gentle pleasures round her moved,

Like a tutelary spirit

Reverenced, like a sister, loved.

Christian meekness smoothed for all the path of
 life,

Who, loving most, should wiseliest love, their only
 strife.

XXVI.

Mute memento of that union
 In a Saxon church survives,
 Where a cross-legged Knight lies sculptured
 As between two wedded Wives—
 Figures with armorial signs of race and birth,
 And the vair rank the pilgrims bore while yet on
 earth.

1830.

XXXV.

LOVING AND LIKING:

IRREGULAR VERSES,

ADRESSED TO A CHILD.

(BY MY SISTER.)

THERE 's more in words than I can teach :
 Yet listen, Child !—I would not preach ;
 But only give some plain directions
 To guide your speech and your affections.
 Say not you *love* a roasted fowl,
 But you may love a screaming owl,
 And, if you can, the unwieldy toad
 That crawls from his secure abode
 Within the mossy garden wall
 When evening dews begin to fall.
 Oh mark the beauty of his eye :
 What wonders in that circle lie !
 So clear, so bright, our fathers said
 He wears a jewel in his head !
 And when, upon some showery day,
 Into a path or public way
 A frog leaps out from bordering grass,
 Startling the timid as they pass,
 Do you observe him, and endeavour
 To take the intruder into favour ;
 Learning from him to find a reason
 For a light heart in a dull season.
 And you may love him in the pool,
 That is for him a happy school,
 In which he swims as taught by nature,
 Fit pattern for a human creature,
 Glancing amid the water bright,
 And sending upward sparkling light.

Nor blush if o'er your heart be stealing
 A love for things that have no feeling :
 The spring's first rose by you espied,
 May fill your breast with joyful pride ;
 And you may love the strawberry-flower,
 And love the strawberry in its bower ;
 But when the fruit, so often praised
 For beauty, to your lip is raised,

Say not you *love* the delicate treat,
 But *like* it, enjoy it, and thankfully eat.

Long may you love your pensioner mouse,
 Though one of a tribe that torment the house :
 Nor dislike for her cruel sport the cat,
 Deadly foe both of mouse and rat ;
 Remember she follows the law of her kind,
 And Instinct is neither wayward nor blind.
 Then think of her beautiful gliding form,
 Her tread that would scarcely crush a worm,
 And her soothing song by the winter fire,
 Soft as the dying throb of the lyre.

I would not circumscribe your love :
 It may soar with the eagle and brood with the dove,
 May pierce the earth with the patient mole,
 Or track the hedgehog to his hole.
 Loving and liking are the solace of life,
 Rock the cradle of joy, smooth the death-bed of
 strife.

You love your father and your mother,
 Your grown-up and your baby brother ;
 You love your sister, and your friends,
 And countless blessings which God sends :
 And while these right affections play,
 You *live* each moment of your day ;
 They lead you on to full content,
 And likings fresh and innocent,
 That store the mind, the memory feed,
 And prompt to many a gentle deed :
 But *likings* come, and pass away ;
 'Tis *love* that remains till our latest day :
 Our heavenward guide is holy love,
 And will be our bliss with saints above.

1832.

XXXVI.

FAREWELL LINES.

'HIGH bliss is only for a higher state,'
 But, surely, if severe afflictions borne
 With patience merit the reward of peace,
 Peace ye deserve ; and may the solid good,
 Sought by a wise though late exchange, and here
 With bounteous hand beneath a cottage-roof
 To you accorded, never be withdrawn,
 Nor for the world's best promises renounced.
 Most soothing was it for a welcome Friend,
 Fresh from the crowded city, to behold
 That lonely union, privacy so deep,
 Such calm employments, such entire content.
 So when the rain is over, the storm laid,

A pair of herons oft-times have I seen,
 Upon a rocky islet, side by side,
 Drying their feathers in the sun, at ease;
 And so, when night with grateful gloom had fallen,
 Two glow-worms in such nearness that they shared,
 As seemed, their soft self-satisfying light,
 Each with the other, on the dewy ground,
 Where He that made them blesses their repose.—
 When wandering among lakes and hills I note,
 Once more, those creatures thus by nature paired,
 And guarded in their tranquil state of life,
 Even, as your happy presence to my mind
 Their union brought, will they repay the debt,
 And send a thankful spirit back to you,
 With hope that we, dear Friends! shall meet again.

XXXVII.

THE REDBREAST.

(SUGGESTED IN A WESTMORELAND COTTAGE.)

DRIVEN in by Autumn's sharpening air
 From half-stripped woods and pastures bare,
 Brisk Robin seeks a kindlier home:
 Not like a beggar is he come,
 But enters as a looked-for guest,
 Confiding in his ruddy breast,
 As if it were a natural shield
 Charged with a blazon on the field,
 Due to that good and pious deed
 Of which we in the Ballad read.
 But pensive fancies putting by,
 And wild-wood sorrows, speedily
 He plays the expert ventriloquist;
 And, caught by glimpses now—now missed,
 Puzzles the listener with a doubt
 If the soft voice he throws about
 Comes from within doors or without!
 Was ever such a sweet confusion,
 Sustained by delicate illusion?
 He's at your elbow—to your feeling
 The notes are from the floor or ceiling;
 And there's a riddle to be guessed,
 'Till you have marked his heaving chest,
 And busy throat whose sink and swell,
 Betray the Elf that loves to dwell
 In Robin's bosom, as a chosen cell.

Heart-pleased we smile upon the Bird
 If seen, and with like pleasure stirred
 Commend him, when he's only heard.

But small and fugitive our gain
 Compared with *hers* who long hath lain,
 With languid limbs and patient head
 Reposing on a lone sick-bed;
 Where now, she daily hears a strain
 That cheats her of too busy cares,
 Eases her pain, and helps her prayers.
 And who but this dear Bird beguiled
 The fever of that pale-faced Child;
 Now cooling, with his passing wing,
 Her forehead, like a breeze of Spring:
 Recalling now, with descendant soft
 Shed round her pillow from aloft,
 Sweet thoughts of angels hovering nigh,
 And the invisible sympathy
 Of 'Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and John,
 Blessing the bed she lies upon *!'—
 And sometimes, just as listening ends
 In slumber, with the cadence blends
 A dream of that low-warbled hymn
 Which old folk, fondly pleased to trim
 Lamps of faith, now burning dim,
 Say that the Cherubs carved in stone,
 When clouds gave way at dead of night
 And the ancient church was filled with light,
 Used to sing in heavenly tone,
 Above and round the sacred places
 They guard, with winged baby-faces.

Thrice happy Creature! in all lands
 Nurtured by hospitable hands:
 Free entrance to this cot has he,
 Entrance and exit both yet free;
 And, when the keen unruffled weather
 That thus brings man and bird together,
 Shall with its pleasantness be past,
 And casement closed and door made fast,
 To keep at bay the howling blast,
He needs not fear the season's rage,
 For the whole house is Robin's cage.
 Whether the bird flit here or there,
 O'er table *lilt*, or perch on chair,
 Though some may frown and make a stir,
 To scare him as a trespasser,
 And he belike will flinch or start,
 Good friends he has to take his part;
 One chiefly, who with voice and look
 Pleads for him from the chimney-nook,
 Where sits the Dame, and wears away

* The words—

'Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and John,
 Bless the bed that I lie on,'

are part of a child's prayer, still in general use through
 the northern counties.

Her long and vacant holiday ;
 With images about her heart,
 Reflected from the years gone by,
 On human nature's second infancy.

1834.

XXXVIII.

HER EYES ARE WILD.

I.

HER eyes are wild, her head is bare,
 The sun has burnt her coal-black hair ;
 Her eyebrows have a rusty stain,
 And she came far from over the main.
 She has a baby on her arm,
 Or else she were alone :
 And underneath the hay-stack warm,
 And on the greenwood stone,
 She talked and sung the woods among,
 And it was in the English tongue.

II.

"Sweet babe ! they say that I am mad,
 But nay, my heart is far too glad ;
 And I am happy when I sing
 Full many a sad and doleful thing :
 Then, lovely baby, do not fear !
 I pray thee have no fear of me ;
 But safe as in a cradle, here
 My lovely baby ! thou shalt be :
 To thee I know too much I owe ;
 I cannot work thee any woe.

III.

A fire was once within my brain ;
 And in my head a dull, dull pain ;
 And fiendish faces, one, two, three,
 Hung at my breast, and pulled at me ;
 But then there came a sight of joy ;
 It came at once to do me good ;
 I waked, and saw my little boy,
 My little boy of flesh and blood ;
 Oh joy for me that sight to see !
 For he was here, and only he.

IV.

Suck, little babe, oh suck again !
 It cools my blood ; it cools my brain ;
 Thy lips I feel them, baby ! they
 Draw from my heart the pain away.
 Oh ! press me with thy little hand ;
 It loosens something at my chest ;

About that tight and deadly band
 I feel thy little fingers prest.
 The breeze I see is in the tree :
 It comes to cool my babe and me.

V.

Oh ! love me, love me, little boy !
 Thou art thy mother's only joy ;
 And do not dread the waves below,
 When o'er the sea-rock's edge we go ;
 The high crag cannot work me harm,
 Nor leaping torrents when they howl ;
 The babe I carry on my arm,
 He saves for me my precious soul ;
 Then happy lie ; for blest am I ;
 Without me my sweet babe would die.

VI.

Then do not fear, my boy ! for thee
 Bold as a lion will I be ;
 And I will always be thy guide,
 Through hollow snows and rivers wide.
 I'll build an Indian bower ; I know
 The leaves that make the softest bed :
 And, if from me thou wilt not go,
 But still be true till I am dead,
 My pretty thing ! then thou shalt sing
 As merry as the birds in spring.

VII.

Thy father cares not for my breast,
 'Tis thine, sweet baby, there to rest ;
 'Tis all thine own !—and, if its hue
 Be changed, that was so fair to view,
 'Tis fair enough for thee, my dove !
 My beauty, little child, is flown,
 But thou wilt live with me in love ;
 And what if my poor cheek be brown ?
 'Tis well for me, thou canst not see
 How pale and wan it else would be.

VIII.

Dread not their taunts, my little Life ;
 I am thy father's wedded wife ;
 And underneath the spreading tree
 We two will live in honesty.
 If his sweet boy he could forsake,
 With me he never would have stayed :
 From him no harm my babe can take ;
 But he, poor man ! is wretched made ;
 And every day we two will pray
 For him that's gone and far away.

IX.

I'll teach my boy the sweetest things :
I'll teach him how the owlet sings.
My little babe ! thy lips are still,
And thou hast almost sucked thy fill.
—Where art thou gone, my own dear child ?
What wicked looks are those I see ?
Alas ! alas ! that look so wild,
It never, never came from me :
If thou art mad, my pretty lad,
Then I must be for ever sad.

X.

Oh ! smile on me, my little lamb !
For I thy own dear mother am :
My love for thee has well been tried :
I've sought thy father far and wide.
I know the poisons of the shade ;
I know the earth-nuts fit for food :
Then, pretty dear, be not afraid :
We'll find thy father in the wood.
Now laugh and be gay, to the woods away !
And there, my babe, we'll live for aye."

POEMS ON THE NAMING OF PLACES.

ADVERTISEMENT.

By persons resident in the country and attached to rural objects, many places will be found unnamed or of unknown names, where little Incidents must have occurred, or feelings been experienced, which will have given to such places a private and peculiar interest. From a wish to give some sort of record to such Incidents, and renew the gratification of such feelings, Names have been given to Places by the Author and some of his Friends, and the following Poems written in consequence.

I.

It was an April morning : fresh and clear
 The Rivulet, delighting in its strength,
 Ran with a young man's speed ; and yet the voice
 Of waters which the winter had supplied
 Was softened down into a vernal tone.
 The spirit of enjoyment and desire,
 And hopes and wishes, from all living things
 Went circling, like a multitude of sounds.
 The budding groves seemed eager to urge on
 The steps of June ; as if their various hues
 Were only hindrances that stood between
 Them and their object : but, meanwhile, prevailed
 Such an entire contentment in the air
 That every naked ash, and tardy tree
 Yet leafless, showed as if the countenance
 With which it looked on this delightful day
 Were native to the summer.—Up the brook
 I roamed in the confusion of my heart,
 Alive to all things and forgetting all.
 At length I to a sudden turning came
 In this continuous glen, where down a rock
 The Stream, so ardent in its course before,
 Sent forth such sallies of glad sound, that all
 Which I till then had heard, appeared the voice
 Of common pleasure : beast and bird, the lamb,
 The shepherd's dog, the linnet and the thrush
 Vied with this waterfall, and made a song,
 Which, while I listened, seemed like the wild growth
 Or like some natural produce of the air,
 That could not cease to be. Green leaves were here ;
 But 'twas the foliage of the rocks—the birch,
 The yew, the holly, and the bright green thorn,
 With hanging islands of resplendent furze :
 And, on a summit, distant a short space,
 By any who should look beyond the dell,
 A single mountain-cottage might be seen.
 I gazed and gazed, and to myself I said,

“Our thoughts at least are ours ; and this wild nook,
 My EMMA, I will dedicate to thee.”
 —Soon did the spot become my other home,
 My dwelling, and my out-of-doors abode.
 And, of the Shepherds who have seen me there,
 To whom I sometimes in our idle talk
 Have told this fancy, two or three, perhaps,
 Years after we are gone and in our graves,
 When they have cause to speak of this wild place,
 May call it by the name of EMMA'S DELL.

1800.

II.

TO JOANNA.

AMID the smoke of cities did you pass
 The time of early youth ; and there you learned,
 From years of quiet industry, to love
 The living Beings by your own fire-side,
 With such a strong devotion, that your heart
 Is slow to meet the sympathies of them
 Who look upon the hills with tenderness,
 And make dear friendships with the streams and
 groves.
 Yet we, who are transgressors in this kind,
 Dwelling retired in our simplicity
 Among the woods and fields, we love you well,
 Joanna ! and I guess, since you have been
 So distant from us now for two long years,
 That you will gladly listen to discourse,
 However trivial, if you thence be taught
 That they, with whom you once were happy, talk
 Familiarly of you and of old times.

While I was seated, now some ten days past,
 Beneath those lofty firs, that overtop
 Their ancient neighbour, the old steeple-tower,
 The Vicar from his gloomy house hard by

Came forth to greet me ; and when he had asked,
 "How fares Joanna, that wild-hearted Maid !
 And when will she return to us ?" he paused ;
 And, after short exchange of village news,
 He with grave looks demanded, for what cause,
 Reviving obsolete idolatry,
 I, like a Runic Priest, in characters
 Of formidable size had chiselled out
 Some uncouth name upon the native rock,
 Above the Rotha, by the forest-side.
 —Now, by those dear immunities of heart
 Engendered between malice and true love,
 I was not loth to be so catechised,
 And this was my reply :—"As it befel,
 One summer morning we had walked abroad
 At break of day, Joanna and myself.
 —'Twas that delightful season when the broom,
 Full-flowered, and visible on every steep,
 Along the copses runs in veins of gold.
 Our pathway led us on to Rotha's banks ;
 And when we came in front of that tall rock
 That eastward looks, I there stopped short—and
 stood
 Tracing the lofty barrier with my eye
 From base to summit ; such delight I found
 To note in shrub and tree, in stone and flower
 That intermixture of delicious hues,
 Along so vast a surface, all at once,
 In one impression, by connecting force
 Of their own beauty, imaged in the heart.
 —When I had gazed perhaps two minutes' space,
 Joanna, looking in my eyes, beheld
 That ravishment of mine, and laughed aloud.
 The Rock, like something starting from a sleep,
 Took up the Lady's voice, and laughed again ;
 That ancient Woman seated on Helm-crag
 Was ready with her cavern ; Hammar-scar,
 And the tall Steep of Silver-how, sent forth
 A noise of laughter ; southern Loughrigg heard,
 And Fairfield answered with a mountain tone ;
 Helvellyn far into the clear blue sky
 Carried the Lady's voice,—old Skiddaw blew
 His speaking-trumpet ;—back out of the clouds
 Of Glaramara southward came the voice ;
 And Kirkstone tossed it from his misty head.
 —Now whether (said I to our cordial Friend,
 Who in the hey-day of astonishment
 Smiled in my face) this were in simple truth
 A work accomplished by the brotherhood
 Of ancient mountains, or my ear was touched
 With dreams and visionary impulses
 To me alone imparted, sure I am
 That there was a loud uproar in the hills.
 And, while we both were listening, to my side

The fair Joanna drew, as if she wished
 To shelter from some object of her fear.
 —And hence, long afterwards, when eighteen moons
 Were wasted, as I chanced to walk alone
 Beneath this rock, at sunrise, on a calm
 And silent morning, I sat down, and there,
 In memory of affections old and true,
 I chiselled out in those rude characters
 Joanna's name deep in the living stone :—
 And I, and all who dwell by my fireside,
 Have called the lovely rock, JOANNA'S ROCK."

1800.

Note.—In Cumberland and Westmoreland are several
 Inscriptions, upon the native rock, which, from the wast-
 ing of time, and the rudeness of the workmanship, have
 been mistaken for Runic. They are without doubt Roman.

The Rotha, mentioned in this poem, is the River which,
 flowing through the lakes of Grasmere and Rydale, falls
 into Wynandermere. On Helmerag, that impressive single
 mountain at the head of the Vale of Grasmere, is a rock
 which from most points of view bears a striking resem-
 blance to an old Woman cowering. Close by this rock is
 one of those fissures or caverns, which in the language of
 the country are called dungeons. Most of the mountains
 here mentioned immediately surround the Vale of Gras-
 mere ; of the others, some are at a considerable distance,
 but they belong to the same cluster.

III.

THERE is an Eminence,—of these our hills
 The last that parleys with the setting sun ;
 We can behold it from our orchard-seat ;
 And, when at evening we pursue our walk
 Along the public way, this Peak, so high
 Above us, and so distant in its height,
 Is visible ; and often seems to send
 Its own deep quiet to restore our hearts.
 The meteors make of it a favourite haunt :
 The star of Jove, so beautiful and large
 In the mid heavens, is never half so fair
 As when he shines above it. 'Tis in truth
 The loneliest place we have among the clouds.
 And She who dwells with me, whom I have loved
 With such communion, that no place on earth
 Can ever be a solitude to me,
 Hath to this lonely Summit given my Name.

1800.

IV.

A NARROW girdle of rough stones and crags,
 A rude and natural causeway, interposed
 Between the water and a winding slope
 Of copse and thicket, leaves the eastern shore

Of Grasmere safe in its own privacy :
 And there myself and two beloved Friends,
 One calm September morning, ere the mist
 Had altogether yielded to the sun,
 Sauntered on this retired and difficult way.
 —Ill suits the road with one in haste ; but we
 Played with our time ; and, as we strolled along,
 It was our occupation to observe
 Such objects as the waves had tossed ashore—
 Feather, or leaf, or weed, or withered bough,
 Each on the other heaped, along the line
 Of the dry wreck. And, in our vacant mood,
 Not seldom did we stop to watch some tuft
 Of dandelion seed or thistle's beard,
 That skimmed the surface of the dead calm lake,
 Suddenly halting now—a lifeless stand !
 And starting off again with freak as sudden ;
 In all its sportive wanderings, all the while,
 Making report of an invisible breeze
 That was its wings, its chariot, and its horse,
 Its playmate, rather say, its moving soul.
 —And often, trifling with a privilege
 Alike indulged to all, we paused, one now,
 And now the other, to point out, perchance
 To pluck, some flower or water-weed, too fair
 Either to be divided from the place
 On which it grew, or to be left alone
 To its own beauty. Many such there are,
 Fair ferns and flowers, and chiefly that tall fern,
 So stately, of the queen Osmunda named ;
 Plant lovelier, in its own retired abode
 On Grasmere's beach, than Naiad by the side
 Of Grecian brook, or Lady of the Mere,
 Sole-sitting by the shores of old romance.
 —So fared we that bright morning : from the fields,
 Meanwhile, a noise was heard, the busy mirth
 Of reapers, men and women, boys and girls.
 Delighted much to listen to those sounds,
 And feeding thus our fancies, we advanced
 Along the indented shore ; when suddenly,
 Through a thin veil of glittering haze was seen
 Before us, on a point of jutting land,
 The tall and upright figure of a Man
 Attired in peasant's garb, who stood alone,
 Angling beside the margin of the lake.
 "Improvident and reckless," we exclaimed,
 "The Man must be, who thus can lose a day
 Of the mid harvest, when the labourer's hire
 Is ample, and some little might be stored
 Wherewith to cheer him in the winter time."
 Thus talking of that Peasant, we approached
 Close to the spot where with his rod and line
 He stood alone ; whereat he turned his head
 To greet us—and we saw a Man worn down

By sickness, gaunt and lean, with sunken cheeks
 And wasted limbs, his legs so long and lean
 That for my single self I looked at them,
 Forgetful of the body they sustained.—
 Too weak to labour in the harvest field,
 The Man was using his best skill to gain
 A pittance from the dead unfeeling lake
 That knew not of his wants. I will not say
 What thoughts immediately were ours, nor how
 The happy idleness of that sweet morn,
 With all its lovely images, was changed
 To serious musing and to self-reproach.
 Nor did we fail to see within ourselves
 What need there is to be reserved in speech,
 And temper all our thoughts with charity.
 —Therefore, unwilling to forget that day,
 My Friend, Myself, and She who then received
 The same admonishment, have called the place
 By a memorial name, uncouth indeed
 As e'er by mariner was given to bay
 Or foreland, on a new-discovered coast ;
 And POINT RASH-JUDGMENT is the name it bears.

1800.

V.

TO M. H.

OUR walk was far among the ancient trees :
 There was no road, nor any woodman's path ;
 But a thick umbrage—checking the wild growth
 Of weed and sapling, along soft green turf
 Beneath the branches—of itself had made
 A track, that brought us to a slip of lawn,
 And a small bed of water in the woods.
 All round this pool both flocks and herds might drink
 On its firm margin, even as from a well,
 Or some stone-basin which the herdsman's hand
 Had shaped for their refreshment ; nor did sun,
 Or wind from any quarter, ever come,
 But as a blessing to this calm recess,
 This glade of water and this one green field.
 The spot was made by Nature for herself ;
 The travellers know it not, and 'twill remain
 Unknown to them ; but it is beautiful ;
 And if a man should plant his cottage near,
 Should sleep beneath the shelter of its trees,
 And blend its waters with his daily meal,
 He would so love it, that in his death-hour
 Its image would survive among his thoughts :
 And therefore, my sweet MARY, this still Nook,
 With all its beeches, we have named from You !

1800.

VI.

WHEN, to the attractions of the busy world,
 Preferring studious leisure, I had chosen
 A habitation in this peaceful Vale,
 Sharp season followed of continual storm
 In deepest winter; and, from week to week,
 Pathway, and lane, and public road, were clogged
 With frequent showers of snow. Upon a hill
 At a short distance from my cottage, stands
 A stately Fir-grove, whither I was wont
 To hasten, for I found, beneath the roof
 Of that perennial shade, a cloistral place
 Of refuge, with an unnumbered floor.
 Here, in safe covert, on the shallow snow,
 And, sometimes, on a speck of visible earth,
 The redbreast near me hopped; nor was I loth
 To sympathise with vulgar coppice birds
 That, for protection from the nipping blast,
 Hither repaired.—A single beech-tree grew
 Within this grove of firs! and, on the fork
 Of that one beech, appeared a thrush's nest;
 A last year's nest, conspicuously built
 At such small elevation from the ground
 As gave sure sign that they, who in that house
 Of nature and of love had made their home
 Amid the fir-trees, all the summer long
 Dwelt in a tranquil spot. And oftentimes,
 A few sheep, stragglers from some mountain-flock,
 Would watch my motions with suspicious stare,
 From the remotest outskirts of the grove,—
 Some nook where they had made their final stand,
 Huddling together from two fears—the fear
 Of me and of the storm. Full many an hour
 Here did I lose. But in this grove the trees
 Had been so thickly planted, and had thriven
 In such perplexed and intricate array;
 That vainly did I seek, beneath their stems
 A length of open space, where to and fro
 My feet might move without concern or care;
 And, baffled thus, though earth from day to day
 Was fettered, and the air by storm disturbed,
 I ceased the shelter to frequent,—and prized,
 Less than I wished to prize, that calm recess.

The snows dissolved, and genial Spring returned
 To clothe the fields with verdure. Other haunts
 Meanwhile were mine; till, one bright April day,
 By chance retiring from the glare of noon
 To this forsaken covert, there I found
 A hoary pathway traced between the trees,
 And winding on with such an easy line
 Along a natural opening, that I stood

Much wondering how I could have sought in vain
 For what was now so obvious. To abide,
 For an allotted interval of ease,
 Under my cottage-roof, had gladly come
 From the wild sea a cherished Visitant;
 And with the sight of this same path—begun,
 Begun and ended, in the shady grove,
 Pleasant conviction flashed upon my mind
 That, to this opportune recess allured,
 He had surveyed it with a finer eye,
 A heart more wakeful; and had worn the track
 By pacing here, unwearied and alone,
 In that habitual restlessness of foot
 That haunts the Sailor measuring o'er and o'er
 His short domain upon the vessel's deck,
 While she pursues her course through the dreary sea.

When thou hadst quitted Esthwaite's pleasant
 shore,
 And taken thy first leave of those green hills
 And rocks that were the play-ground of thy youth,
 Year followed year, my Brother! and we two,
 Conversing not, knew little in what mould
 Each other's mind was fashioned; and at length,
 When once again we met in Grasmere Vale,
 Between us there was little other bond
 Than common feelings of fraternal love.
 But thou, a School-boy, to the sea hadst carried
 Undying recollections; Nature there
 Was with thee; she, who loved us both, she still
 Was with thee; and even so didst thou become
 A *silent* Poet; from the solitude
 Of the vast sea didst bring a watchful heart
 Still couchant, an inevitable ear,
 And an eye practised like a blind man's touch.
 —Back to the joyless Ocean thou art gone;
 Nor from this vestige of thy musing hours
 Could I withhold thy honoured name,—and now
 I love the fir-grove with a perfect love.
 Thither do I withdraw when cloudless suns
 Shine hot, or wind blows troublesome and strong;
 And there I sit at evening, when the steep
 Of Silver-how, and Grasmere's peaceful lake,
 And one green island, gleam between the stems
 Of the dark firs, a visionary scene!
 And, while I gaze upon the spectacle
 Of clouded splendour, on this dream-like sight
 Of solemn loveliness, I think on thee,
 My Brother, and on all which thou hast lost.
 Nor seldom, if I rightly guess, while Thou,
 Muttering the verses which I muttered first
 Among the mountains, through the midnight watch
 Art pacing thoughtfully the vessel's deck
 In some far region, here, while o'er my head,

At every impulse of the moving breeze,
 The fir-grove murmurs with a sea-like sound,
 Alone I tread this path ;—for aught I know,
 Timing my steps to thine ; and, with a store
 Of undistinguishable sympathies,
 Mingling most earnest wishes for the day
 When we, and others whom we love, shall meet
 A second time, in Grasmere's happy Vale.

1805.

Note.—This wish was not granted ; the lamented Person
 not long after perished by shipwreck, in discharge of his
 duty as Commander of the Honourable East India Com-
 pany's Vessel, the Earl of Abergavenny.

VII.

Forth from a jutting ridge, around whose base
 Winds our deep Vale, two heath-clad Rocks ascend
 In fellowship, the loftiest of the pair
 Rising to no ambitious height ; yet both,
 O'er lake and stream, mountain and flowery mead,
 Unfolding prospects fair as human eyes

Ever beheld. Up-led with mutual help,
 To one or other brow of those twin Peaks
 Were two adventurous Sisters wont to climb,
 And took no note of the hour while thence they
 gazed,
 The blooming heath their couch, gazed, side by
 side,

In speechless admiration. I, a witness
 And frequent sharer of their calm delight
 With thankful heart, to either Eminence
 Gave the baptismal name each Sister bore.
 Now are they parted, far as Death's cold hand
 Hath power to part the Spirits of those who love
 As they did love. Ye kindred Pinnacles—
 That, while the generations of mankind
 Follow each other to their hiding-place
 In time's abyss, are privileged to endure
 Beautiful in yourselves, and richly graced
 With like command of beauty—grant your aid
 For MARY's humble, SARAH's silent, claim,
 That their pure joy in nature may survive
 From age to age in blended memory.

1845.

POEMS OF THE FANCY.

I.

A MORNING EXERCISE.

FANCY, who leads the pastimes of the glad,
Full oft is pleased a wayward dart to throw;
Sending sad shadows after things not sad,
Peopling the harmless fields with signs of woe:
Beneath her sway, a simple forest cry
Becomes an echo of man's misery.

Blithe ravens croak of death; and when the owl
Tries his two voices for a favourite strain—
Tu-whit—Tu-who! the unsuspecting fowl
Forebodes mishap or seems but to complain;
Fancy, intent to harass and annoy,
Can thus pervert the evidence of joy.

Through border wilds where naked Indians stray,
Myriads of notes attest her subtle skill;
A feathered task-master cries, "WORK AWAY!"
And, in thy iteration, "WHIP POOR WILL!"
Is heard the spirit of a toil-worn slave,
Lashed out of life, not quiet in the grave.

What wonder? at her bidding, ancient lays
Steepest in dire grief the voice of Philomel;
And that fleet messenger of summer days,
The Swallow, twittered subject to like spell;
But ne'er could Fancy bend the buoyant Lark
To melancholy service—hark! O hark!

The daisy sleeps upon the dewy lawn,
Not lifting yet the head that evening bowed;
But *He* is risen, a later star of dawn,
Glittering and twinkling near yon rosy cloud;
Bright gem instinct with music, vocal spark;
The happiest bird that sprang out of the Ark!

Hail, blest above all kinds!—Supremely skilled
Restless with fixed to balance, high with low,
Thou leav'st the halcyon free her hopes to build
On such forbearance as the deep may show;
Perpetual flight, unchecked by earthly ties,
Leav'st to the wandering bird of paradise.

* See Waterton's Wanderings in South America.

Faithful, though swift as lightning, the meek dove;
Yet more hath Nature reconciled in thee;
So constant with thy downward eye of love,
Yet, in aerial singleness, so free;
So humble, yet so ready to rejoice
In power of wing and never-wearied voice.

To the last point of vision, and beyond,
Mount, daring warbler!—that love-prompted strain,
(Twixt thee and thine a never-failing bond)
Thrills not the less the bosom of the plain:
Yet might'st thou seem, proud privilege! to sing
All independent of the leafy spring.

How would it please old Ocean to partake,
With sailors longing for a breeze in vain,
The harmony thy notes most gladly make
Where earth resembles most his own domain!
Urania's self might welcome with pleased ear
These matins mounting towards her native sphere.

Chanter by heaven attracted, whom no bars
To day-light known deter from that pursuit,
'Tis well that some sage instinct, when the stars
Come forth at evening, keeps Thee still and mute;
For not an eyelid could to sleep incline
Wert thou among them, singing as they shine!

1828.

II.

A FLOWER GARDEN,

AT COLEORTON HALL, LEICESTERSHIRE.

TELL me, ye Zephyrs! that unfold,
While fluttering o'er this gay Recess,
Pinions that fanned the teeming mould
Of Eden's blissful wilderness,
Did only softly-stealing hours
There close the peaceful lives of flowers?

Say, when the *moving* creatures saw
All kinds commingled without fear,
Prevailed a like indulgent law
For the still growths that prosper here?
Did wanton fawn and kid forbear
The half-blown rose, the lily spare?

Or peeped they often from their beds
And prematurely disappeared,
Devoured like pleasure ere it spreads
A bosom to the sun endeared?
If such their harsh untimely doom,
It falls not *here* on bud or bloom.

All summer-long the happy Eve
Of this fair Spot her flowers may bind,
Nor e'er, with ruffled fancy, grieve,
From the next glance she casts, to find
That love for little things by Fate
Is rendered vain as love for great.

Yet, where the guardian fence is wound,
So subtly are our eyes beguiled
We see not nor suspect a bound,
No more than in some forest wild;
The sight is free as air—or crost
Only by art in nature lost.

And, though the jealous turf refuse
By random footsteps to be prest,
And feed on never-sullied dews,
Ye, gentle breezes from the west,
With all the ministers of hope
Are tempted to this sunny slope!

And hither throngs of birds resort;
Some, inmates lodged in shady nests,
Some, perched on stems of stately port
That nod to welcome transient guests;
While hare and leveret, seen at play,
Appear not more shut out than they.

Apt emblem (for reproof of pride)
This delicate Enclosure shows
Of modest kindness, that would hide
The firm protection she bestows;
Of manners, like its viewless fence,
Ensuring peace to innocence.

Thus spake the moral Muse—her wing
Abruptly spreading to depart,
She left that farewell offering,
Memento for some docile heart;
That may respect the good old age
When Fancy was Truth's willing Page;
And Truth would skim the flowery glade,
Though entering but as Fancy's Shade.

1824.

III.

A WHIRL-BLAST from behind the hill
Rushed o'er the wood with startling sound;
Then—all at once the air was still,
And showers of hailstones pattered round.
Where leafless oaks towered high above,
I sat within an undergrove
Of tallest hollies, tall and green;
A fairer bower was never seen.
From year to year the spacious floor
With withered leaves is covered o'er,
And all the year the bower is green.
But see! where'er the hailstones drop
The withered leaves all skip and hop;
There's not a breeze—no breath of air—
Yet here, and there, and every where
Along the floor, beneath the shade
By those embowering hollies made,
The leaves in myriads jump and spring,
As if with pipes and music rare
Some Robin Good-fellow were there,
And all those leaves, in festive glee,
Were dancing to the minstrelsy.

1799.

IV.

THE WATERFALL AND THE EGLANTINE.

I.

"BEGONE, thou fond presumptuous Elf,"
Exclaimed an angry Voice,
"Nor dare to thrust thy foolish self
Between me and my choice!"
A small Cascade fresh swoln with snows
Thus threatened a poor Briar-rose,
That, all bespattered with his foam,
And dancing high and dancing low,
Was living, as a child might know,
In an unhappy home.

II.

"Dost thou presume my course to block?
Off, off! or, puny Thing!
I'll hurl thee headlong with the rock
To which thy fibres cling."
The Flood was tyrannous and strong;
The patient Briar suffered long,
Nor did he utter groan or sigh,
Hoping the danger would be past;
But, seeing no relief, at last,
He ventured to reply.

III.

"Ah!" said the Briar, "blame me not;
 Why should we dwell in strife?
 We who in this sequestered spot
 Once lived a happy life!
 You stirred me on my rocky bed—
 What pleasure through my veins you spread
 The summer long, from day to day,
 My leaves you freshened and bedewed;
 Nor was it common gratitude
 That did your cares repay.

IV.

When spring came on with bud and bell,
 Among these rocks did I
 Before you hang my wreaths to tell
 That gentle days were nigh!
 And in the sultry summer hours,
 I sheltered you with leaves and flowers;
 And in my leaves—now shed and gone,
 The linnet lodged, and for us two
 Chanted his pretty songs, when you
 Had little voice or none.

V.

But now proud thoughts are in your breast—
 What grief is mine you see,
 Ah! would you think, even yet how blest
 Together we might be!
 Though of both leaf and flower bereft,
 Some ornaments to me are left—
 Rich store of scarlet hips is mine,
 With which I, in my humble way,
 Would deck you many a winter day,
 A happy Eglantine!"

VI.

What more he said I cannot tell,
 The Torrent down the rocky dell
 Came thundering loud and fast;
 I listened, nor aught else could hear;
 The Briar quaked—and much I fear
 Those accents were his last.

1800.

V.

THE OAK AND THE BROOM.

A PASTORAL.

I.

His simple truths did Andrew glean
 Beside the babbling rills;
 A careful student he had been
 Among the woods and hills.

One winter's night, when through the trees
 The wind was roaring, on his knees
 His youngest born did Andrew hold:
 And while the rest, a ruddy quire,
 Were seated round their blazing fire,
 This Tale the Shepherd told.

II.

"I saw a crag, a lofty stone
 As ever tempest beat!
 Out of its head an Oak had grown,
 A Broom out of its feet.
 The time was March, a cheerful noon—
 The thaw-wind, with the breath of June,
 Breathed gently from the warm south-west:
 When, in a voice sedate with age,
 This Oak, a giant and a sage,
 His neighbour thus addressed:—

III.

"Eight weary weeks, through rock and clay,
 Along this mountain's edge,
 The Frost hath wrought both night and day,
 Wedge driving after wedge.
 Look up! and think, above your head
 What trouble, surely, will be bred;
 Last night I heard a crash—'tis true,
 The splinters took another road—
 I see them yonder—what a load
 For such a Thing as you!

IV.

You are preparing as before,
 To deck your slender shape;
 And yet, just three years back—no more—
 You had a strange escape:
 Down from yon cliff a fragment broke;
 It thundered down, with fire and smoke,
 And hitherward pursued its way;
 This ponderous block was caught by me,
 And o'er your head, as you may see,
 'Tis hanging to this day!

V.

If breeze or bird to this rough steep
 Your kind's first seed did bear;
 The breeze had better been asleep,
 The bird caught in a snare:
 For you and your green twigs decoy
 The little witless shepherd-boy
 To come and slumber in your bower;
 And, trust me, on some sultry noon,
 Both you and he, Heaven knows how soon!
 Will perish in one hour.

I 2

VI.

From me this friendly warning take'—
 The Broom began to doze,
 And thus, to keep herself awake,
 Did gently interpose :
 'My thanks for your discourse are due ;
 That more than what you say is true,
 I know, and I have known it long ;
 Frail is the bond by which we hold
 Our being, whether young or old,
 Wise, foolish, weak, or strong.

VII.

Disasters, do the best we can,
 Will reach both great and small ;
 And he is oft the wisest man,
 Who is not wise at all.
 For me, why should I wish to roam ?
 This spot is my paternal home,
 It is my pleasant heritage ;
 My father many a happy year,
 Spread here his careless blossoms, here
 Attained a good old age.

VIII.

Even such as his may be my lot.
 What cause have I to haunt
 My heart with terrors ? Am I not
 In truth a favoured plant !
 On me such bounty Summer pours,
 That I am covered o'er with flowers ;
 And, when the Frost is in the sky,
 My branches are so fresh and gay
 That you might look at me and say,
 This Plant can never die.

IX.

The butterfly, all green and gold,
 To me hath often flown,
 Here in my blossoms to behold
 Wings lovely as his own.
 When grass is chill with rain or dew,
 Beneath my shade, the mother-ewe
 Lies with her infant lamb ; I see
 The love they to each other make,
 And the sweet joy which they partake,
 It is a joy to me.'

X.

Her voice was blithe, her heart was light ;
 The Broom might have pursued
 Her speech, until the stars of night
 Their journey had renewed ;
 But in the branches of the oak
 Two ravens now began to croak

Their nuptial song, a gladsome air ;
 And to her own green bower the breeze
 That instant brought two stripling bees
 To rest, or murmur there.

XI.

One night, my Children ! from the north
 There came a furious blast ;
 At break of day I ventured forth,
 And near the cliff I passed.
 The storm had fallen upon the Oak,
 And struck him with a mighty stroke,
 And whirled, and whirled him far away ;
 And, in one hospitable cleft,
 The little careless Broom was left
 To live for many a day."

1800.

VI.

TO A SEXTON.

Let thy wheel-barrow alone—
 Wherefore, Sexton, piling still
 In thy bone-house bone on bone ?
 'Tis already like a hill
 In a field of battle made,
 Where three thousand skulls are laid ;
 These died in peace each with the other,—
 Father, sister, friend, and brother.

Mark the spot to which I point !
 From this platform, eight feet square,
 Take not even a finger-joint :
 Andrew's whole fire-side is there.
 Here, alone, before thine eyes,
 Simon's sickly daughter lies,
 From weakness now, and pain defended,
 Whom he twenty winters tended.

Look but at the gardener's pride—
 How he glories, when he sees
 Roses, lilies, side by side,
 Violets in families !
 By the heart of Man, his tears,
 By his hopes and by his fears,
 Thou, too heedless, art the Warden
 Of a far superior garden.

Thus then, each to other dear,
 Let them all in quiet lie,
 Andrew there, and Susan here,
 Neighbours in mortality.

And, should I live through sun and rain
 Seven widowed years without my Jane,
 O Sexton, do not then remove her,
 Let one grave hold the Loved and Lover !

1799.

VII.

TO THE DAISY.

'Her * divine skill taught me this,
 That from every thing I saw
 I could some instruction draw,
 And raise pleasure to the height
 Through the meanest object's sight.
 By the murmur of a spring,
 Or the least bough's rustelling ;
 By a Daisy whose leaves spread
 Shut when Titan goes to bed ;
 Or a shady bush or tree ;
 She could more infuse in me
 Than all Nature's beauties can
 In some other wiser man.'

G. WITHER.

In youth from rock to rock I went,
 From hill to hill in discontent
 Of pleasure high and turbulent,
 Most pleased when most uneasy ;
 But now my own delights I make,—
 My thirst at every rill can slake,
 And gladly Nature's love partake,
 Of Thee, sweet Daisy !

Thee Winter in the garland wears
 That thinly decks his few grey hairs ;
 Spring parts the clouds with softest airs,
 That she may sun thee ;
 Whole Summer-fields are thine by right ;
 And Autumn, melancholy Wight !
 Doth in thy crimson head delight
 When rains are on thee.

In shoals and bands, a morrice train,
 Thou greet'st the traveller in the lane ;
 Pleased at his greeting thee again ;
 Yet nothing daunted,
 Nor grieved if thou be set at nought :
 And oft alone in nooks remote
 We meet thee, like a pleasant thought,
 When such are wanted.

Be violets in their secret mews
 The flowers the wanton Zephyrs choose ;
 Proud be the rose, with rains and dews
 Her head impearling,

* His muse.

Thou liv'st with less ambitious aim,
 Yet hast not gone without thy fame ;
 Thou art indeed by many a claim
 The Poet's darling.

If to a rock from rains he fly,
 Or, some bright day of April sky,
 Imprisoned by hot sunshine lie
 Near the green holly,
 And wearily at length should fare ;
 He needs but look about, and there
 Thou art !—a friend at hand, to scare
 His melancholy.

A hundred times, by rock or bower,
 Ere thus I have lain couched an hour,
 Have I derived from thy sweet power
 Some apprehension ;
 Some steady love ; some brief delight ;
 Some memory that had taken flight ;
 Some chime of fancy wrong or right ;
 Or stray invention.

If stately passions in me burn,
 And one chance look to Thee should turn,
 I drink out of an humbler urn
 A lowlier pleasure ;
 The homely sympathy that heeds
 The common life, our nature breeds ;
 A wisdom fitted to the needs
 Of hearts at leisure.

Fresh-smitten by the morning ray,
 When thou art up, alert and gay,
 Then, cheerful Flower ! my spirits play
 With kindred gladness :
 And when, at dusk, by dews opprest
 Thou sink'st, the image of thy rest
 Hath often eased my pensive breast
 Of careful sadness.

And all day long I number yet,
 All seasons through, another debt,
 Which I, wherever thou art met,
 To thee am owing ;
 An instinct call it, a blind sense ;
 A happy, genial influence,
 Coming one knows not how, nor whence,
 Nor whither going.

Child of the Year ! that round dost run
 Thy pleasant course,—when day's begun
 As ready to salute the sun

As lark or leveret,
Thy long-lost praise thou shalt regain ;
Nor be less dear to future men
Than in old time;—thou not in vain
Art Nature's favourite.*

1802.

VIII.

TO THE SAME FLOWER.

With little here to do or see
Of things that in the great world be,
Daisy ! again I talk to thee,

For thou art worthy,
Thou unassuming Common-place
Of Nature, with that homely face,
And yet with something of a grace,
Which Love makes for thee !

Oft on the dappled turf at ease
I sit, and play with similes,
Loose types of things through all degrees,

Thoughts of thy raising :
And many a fond and idle name
I give to thee, for praise or blame,
As is the humour of the game,

While I am gazing.

A nun demure of lowly port ;
Or sprightly maiden, of Love's court,
In thy simplicity the sport

Of all temptations ;
A queen in crown of rubies drest ;
A starveling in a scanty vest ;
Are all, as seems to suit thee best,
Thy appellations.

A little cyclops, with one eye
Staring to threaten and defy,
That thought comes next—and instantly

The freak is over,
The shape will vanish—and behold
A silver shield with boss of gold,
That spreads itself, some faery bold
In fight to cover !

I see thee glittering from afar—
And then thou art a pretty star ;
Not quite so fair as many are

* See, in Chaucer and the elder Poets, the honours formerly paid to this flower.

In heaven above thee !
Yet like a star, with glittering crest,
Self-poised in air thou seem'st to rest ;—
May peace come never to his nest,
Who shall reprove thee !

Bright *Flower* ! for by that name at last,
When all my reveries are past,
I call thee, and to that cleave fast,
Sweet silent creature !
That breath'st with me in sun and air,
Do thou, as thou art wont, repair
My heart with gladness, and a share
Of thy meek nature !

1805.

IX.

THE GREEN LINNET.

BENEATH these fruit-tree boughs that shed
Their snow-white blossoms on my head,
With brightest sunshine round me spread

Of spring's unclouded weather,
In this sequestered nook how sweet
To sit upon my orchard-seat !
And birds and flowers once more to greet,
My last year's friends together.

One have I marked, the happiest guest
In all this covert of the blest :
Hail to Thee, far above the rest
In joy of voice and pinion !
Thou, Linnet ! in thy green array,
Presiding Spirit here to-day,
Dost lead the revels of the May ;
And this is thy dominion.

While birds, and butterflies, and flowers,
Make all one band of paramours,
Thou, ranging up and down the bowers,
Art sole in thy employment :
A Life, a Presence like the Air,
Scattering thy gladness without care,
Too blest with any one to pair ;
Thyself thy own enjoyment.

Amid yon tuft of hazel trees,
That twinkle to the gusty breeze,
Behold him perched in ecstasies,
Yet seeming still to hover ;
There ! where the flutter of his wings
Upon his back and body flings
Shadows and sunny glimmerings,
That cover him all over.

My dazzled sight he oft deceives,
 A Brother of the dancing leaves;
 Then flits, and from the cottage-eaves
 Pours forth his song in gushes;
 As if by that exulting strain
 He mocked and treated with disdain
 The voiceless Form he chose to feign,
 While fluttering in the bushes.

1903.

X.

TO A SKY-LARK.

Up with me! up with me into the clouds!
 For thy song, Lark, is strong;
 Up with me, up with me into the clouds!
 Singing, singing,
 With clouds and sky about thee ringing,
 Lift me, guide me till I find
 That spot which seems so to thy mind!

I have walked through wildernesses dreary
 And to-day my heart is weary;
 Had I now the wings of a Faery,
 Up to thee would I fly.
 There is madness about thee, and joy divine
 In that song of thine;
 Lift me, guide me high and high
 To thy banqueting-place in the sky.

Joyous as morning,
 Thou art laughing and scorning;
 Thou hast a nest for thy love and thy rest,
 And, though little troubled with sloth,
 Drunken Lark! thou would'st be loth
 To be such a traveller as I.
 Happy, happy Liver,
 With a soul as strong as a mountain river
 Pouring out praise to the almighty Giver,
 Joy and jollity be with us both!

Alas! my journey, rugged and uneven,
 Through prickly moors or dusty ways must wind;
 But hearing thee, or others of thy kind,
 As full of gladness and as free of heaven,
 I, with my fate contented, will plod on,
 And hope for higher raptures, when life's day is done.

1805.

XI.

TO THE SMALL CELANDINE.*

PANSIES, lilies, kingcups, daisies,
 Let them live upon their praises;
 Long as there's a sun that sets,
 Primroses will have their glory;
 Long as there are violets,
 They will have a place in story:
 There's a flower that shall be mine,
 'Tis the little Celandine.

Eyes of some men travel far
 For the finding of a star;
 Up and down the heavens they go,
 Men that keep a mighty rout!
 I'm as great as they, I throw,
 Since the day I found thee out,
 Little Flower!—I'll make a stir,
 Like a sage astronomer.

Modest, yet withal an Elf
 Bold, and lavish of thyself;
 Since we needs must first have met
 I have seen thee, high and low,
 Thirty years or more, and yet
 'Twas a face I did not know;
 Thou hast now, go where I may,
 Fifty greetings in a day.

Ere a leaf is on a bush,
 In the time before the thrush
 Has a thought about her nest,
 Thou wilt come with half a call,
 Spreading out thy glossy breast
 Like a careless Prodigal;
 Telling tales about the sun,
 When we've little warmth, or none.

Poets, vain men in their mood!
 Travel with the multitude:
 Never heed them; I aver
 That they all are wanton wooers;
 But the thrifty cottager,
 Who stirs little out of doors,
 Joys to spy thee near her home;
 Spring is coming, Thou art come!

Comfort have thou of thy merit,
 Kindly, unassuming Spirit!
 Careless of thy neighbourhood,
 Thou dost show thy pleasant face

* Common Pilewort.

On the moor, and in the wood,
In the lane;—there's not a place,
Howsoever mean it be,
But 'tis good enough for thee.

Ill befall the yellow flowers,
Children of the flaring hours!
Buttercups, that will be seen,
Whether we will see or no;
Others, too, of lofty mien;
They have done as worldlings do,
Taken praise that should be thine,
Little, humble Celandine!

Prophet of delight and mirth,
Ill-requited upon earth;
Herald of a mighty band,
Of a joyous train ensuing,
Serving at my heart's command,
Tasks that are no tasks renewing,
I will sing, as doth behove,
Hymns in praise of what I love!

1803.

XII.

TO THE SAME FLOWER.

PLEASURES newly found are sweet
When they lie about our feet:
February last, my heart
First at sight of thee was glad;
All unheard of as thou art,
Thou must needs, I think, have had,
Celandine! and long ago,
Praise of which I nothing know.

I have not a doubt but he,
Whosoe'er the man might be,
Who the first with pointed rays
(Workman worthy to be sainted)
Set the sign-board in a blaze,
When the rising sun he painted,
Took the fancy from a glance
At thy glittering countenance.

Soon as gentle breezes bring
News of winter's vanishing,
And the children build their bowers,
Sticking 'kerchief-plots of mould
All about with full-blown flowers,
Thick as sheep in shepherd's fold!
With the proudest thou art there,
Mantling in the tiny square.

Often have I sighed to measure
By myself a lonely pleasure,
Sighed to think, I read a book
Only read, perhaps, by me;
Yet I long could overlook
Thy bright coronet and Thee,
And thy arch and wily ways,
And thy store of other praise.

Blithe of heart, from week to week
Thou dost play at hide-and-seek;
While the patient primrose sits
Like a beggar in the cold,
Thou, a flower of wiser wits,
Slip'st into thy sheltering hold;
Liveliest of the vernal train
When ye all are out again.

Drawn by what peculiar spell,
By what charm of sight or smell,
Does the dim-eyed curious Bee,
Labouring for her waxen cells,
Fondly settle upon Thee
Prized above all buds and bells
Opening daily at thy side,
By the season multiplied?

Thou art not beyond the moon,
But a thing 'beneath our shoon:'
Let the bold Discoverer thrud
In his bark the polar sea;
Rear who will a pyramid;
Praise it is enough for me,
If there be but three or four
Who will love my little Flower.

1803.

XIII.

THE SEVEN SISTERS;

OR,

THE SOLITUDE OF BINNORIE.

I.

SEVEN Daughters had Lord Archibald,
All children of one mother:
You could not say in one short day
What love they bore each other.
A garland, of seven lilies, wrought!
Seven Sisters that together dwell;
But he, bold Knight as ever fought,
Their Father, took of them no thought,
He loved the wars so well.
Sing, mournfully, oh! mournfully,
The solitude of Binnorie!

II.

Fresh blows the wind, a western wind,
 And from the shores of Erin,
 Across the wave, a Rover brave
 To Binnorie is steering :
 Right onward to the Scottish strand
 The gallant ship is borne ;
 The warriors leap upon the land,
 And hark ! the Leader of the band
 Hath blown his bugle horn.
 Sing, mournfully, oh ! mournfully,
 The solitude of Binnorie.

III

Beside a grotto of their own,
 With boughs above them closing,
 The Seven are laid, and in the shade
 They lie like fawns reposing.
 But now, upstarting with affright
 At noise of man and steed,
 Away they fly to left, to right—
 Of your fair household, Father-knight,
 Methinks you take small heed !
 Sing, mournfully, oh ! mournfully,
 The solitude of Binnorie.

IV.

Away the seven fair Campbells fly,
 And, over hill and hollow,
 With menace proud, and insult loud,
 The youthful Rovers follow.
 Cried they, " Your Father loves to roam :
 Enough for him to find
 The empty house when he comes home ;
 For us your yellow ringlets comb,
 For us be fair and kind ! "
 Sing, mournfully, oh ! mournfully,
 The solitude of Binnorie.

V.

Some close behind, some side by side,
 Like clouds in stormy weather ;
 They run, and cry, " Nay, let us die,
 And let us die together."
 A lake was near ; the shore was steep ;
 There never foot had been ;
 They ran, and with a desperate leap
 Together plunged into the deep,
 Nor ever more were seen.
 Sing, mournfully, oh ! mournfully,
 The solitude of Binnorie.

VI.

The stream that flows out of the lake,
 As through the glen it rambles,
 Repeats a moan o'er moss and stone,
 For those seven lovely Campbells.
 Seven little Islands, green and bare,
 Have risen from out the deep :
 The fishers say, those sisters fair,
 By faeries all are buried there,
 And there together sleep.
 Sing, mournfully, oh ! mournfully,
 The solitude of Binnorie.

1804.

XIV.

Who fancied what a pretty sight
 This Rock would be if edged around
 With living snow-drops ? circlet bright !
 How glorious to this orchard-ground !
 Who loved the little Rock, and set
 Upon its head this coronet ?

Was it the humour of a child ?
 Or rather of some gentle maid,
 Whose brows, the day that she was styled
 The shepherd-queen, were thus arrayed ?
 Of man mature, or matron sage ?
 Or old man toying with his age !

I asked—'twas whispered ; The device
 To each and all might well belong :
 It is the Spirit of Paradise
 That prompts such work, a Spirit strong,
 That gives to all the self-same bent
 Where life is wise and innocent.

1803.

XV.

THE

REDBREAST CHASING THE BUTTERFLY.

Art thou the bird whom Man loves best,
 The pious bird with the scarlet breast,
 Our little English Robin ;
 The bird that comes about our doors
 When Autumn-winds are sobbing ?
 Art thou the Peter of Norway Boors ?
 Their Thomas in Finland,
 And Russia far inland ?
 The bird, that by some name or other
 All men who know thee call their brother,

The darling of children and men?
 Could Father Adam* open his eyes
 And see this sight beneath the skies,
 He'd wish to close them again.
 —If the Butterfly knew but his friend,
 Hither his flight he would bend;
 And find his way to me,
 Under the branches of the tree:
 In and out, he darts about;
 Can this be the bird, to man so good,
 That, after their bewildering,
 Covered with leaves the little children,
 So painfully in the wood?

What ailed thee, Robin, that thou could'st pursue
 A beautiful creature,
 That is gentle by nature?
 Beneath the summer sky
 From flower to flower let him fly;
 'Tis all that he wishes to do.
 The cheerer Thou of our in-door sadness,
 He is the friend of our summer gladness:
 What hinders, then, that ye should be
 Playmates in the sunny weather,
 And fly about in the air together!
 His beautiful wings in crimson are drest,
 A crimson as bright as thine own:
 Would'st thou be happy in thy nest,
 O pious Bird! whom man loves best,
 Love him, or leave him alone!

1806.

XVI.

SONG FOR THE SPINNING WHEEL.

FOUNDED UPON A BELIEF PREVALENT AMONG THE PASTORAL
 VALES OF WESTMORELAND.

SWIFTLY turn the murmuring wheel!
 Night has brought the welcome hour,
 When the weary fingers feel
 Help, as if from faery power;
 Dewy night o'er shades the ground;
 Turn the swift wheel round and round!

Now, beneath the starry sky,
 Couch the widely-scattered sheep;—
 Ply the pleasant labour, ply!
 For the spindle, while they sleep,
 Runs with speed more smooth and fine,
 Gathering up a trustier line.

* See *Paradise Lost*, Book XI., where Adam points out to Eve the ominous sign of the Eagle chasing 'two Birds of gayest plume,' and the gentle Hart and Hind pursued by their enemy.

Short-lived likings may be bred
 By a glance from fickle eyes;
 But true love is like the thread
 Which the kindly wool supplies,
 When the flocks are all at rest
 Sleeping on the mountain's breast.

1812.

XVII.

HINT FROM THE MOUNTAINS

FOR CERTAIN POLITICAL PRETENDERS.

"Who but hails the sight with pleasure
 When the wings of genius rise,
 Their ability to measure
 With great enterprise;
 But in man was ne'er such daring
 As yon Hawk exhibits, pairing
 His brave spirit with the war in
 The stormy skies!

Mark him, how his power he uses,
 Lays it by, at will resumes!
 Mark, ere for his haunt he chooses
 Clouds and utter glooms!
 There, he wheels in downward mazes;
 Sunward now his flight he raises,
 Catches fire, as seems, and blazes
 With uninjured plumes!"—

ANSWER.

"Stranger, 'tis no act of courage
 Which aloft thou dost discern;
 No bold *bird* gone forth to forage
 'Mid the tempest stern;
 But such mockery as the nations
 See, when public perturbations
 Lift men from their native stations,
 Like yon TUFT OF FERN;

Such it is; the aspiring creature
 Soaring on undaunted wing,
 (So you fancied) is by nature
 A dull helpless thing,
 Dry and withered, light and yellow;—
That to be the tempest's fellow!
 Wait—and you shall see how hollow
 Its endeavouring!"

1817.

XVIII.

ON SEEING A NEEDLECASE IN THE
FORM OF A HARP.

THE WORK OF E.M.S.

Frowns are on every Muse's face,
Reproaches from their lips are sent,
That mimicry should thus disgrace
The noble Instrument.

A very Harp in all but size !
Needles for strings in apt gradation !
Minerva's self would stigmatize
The unclassic profanation.

Even her *own* needle that subdued
Arachne's rival spirit,
Though wrought in Vulcan's happiest mood,
Such honour could not merit.

And this, too, from the Laureate's Child,
A living lord of melody !
How will her Sire be reconciled
To the refined indignity ?

I spake, when whispered a low voice,
" Bard ! moderate your ire ;
Spirits of all degrees rejoice
In presence of the lyre.

The Minstrels of Pygmean bands,
Dwarf Genii, moonlight-loving Fays,
Have shells to fit their tiny hands
And suit their slender lays.

Some, still more delicate of ear,
Have lutes (believe my words)
Whose framework is of gossamer,
While sunbeams are the chords.

Gay Sylphs this miniature will court,
Made vocal by their brushing wings,
And sullen Gnomes will learn to sport
Around its polished strings ;

Whence strains to love-sick maiden dear,
While in her lonely bower she tries
To cheat the thought she cannot cheer,
By fanciful embroideries.

Trust, angry Bard ! a knowing Sprite,
Nor think the Harp her lot deplores ;
Though 'mid the stars the Lyre shine bright,
Love *stoops* as fondly as he soars."

1827.

XIX.

TO A LADY,

IN ANSWER TO A REQUEST THAT I WOULD WRITE HER A
POEM UPON SOME DRAWINGS THAT SHE HAD MADE OF
FLOWERS IN THE ISLAND OF MADEIRA.

FAIR Lady ! can I sing of flowers
That in Madeira bloom and fade,
I who ne'er sate within their bowers,
Nor through their sunny lawns have strayed ?
How they in sprightly dance are worn
By Shepherd-groom or May-day queen,
Or holy festal pomps adorn,
These eyes have never seen.

Yet tho' to me the pencil's art
No like remembrances can give,
Your portraits still may reach the heart
And there for gentle pleasure live ;
While Fancy ranging with free scope
Shall on some lovely Alien set
A name with us endeared to hope,
To peace, or fond regret.

Still as we look with nicer care,
Some new resemblance we may trace :
A *Heart's-ease* will perhaps be there,
A *Speedwell* may not want its place.
And so may we, with charmed mind
Beholding what your skill has wrought,
Another *Star-of-Bethlehem* find,
A new *Forget-me-not*.

From earth to heaven with motion fleet
From heaven to earth our thoughts will pass,
A *Holy-thistle* here we meet
And there a *Shepherd's weather-glass* ;
And haply some familiar name
Shall grace the fairest, sweetest, plant
Whose presence cheers the drooping frame
Of English Emigrant.

Gazing she feels its power beguile
Sad thoughts, and breathes with easier breath ;
Alas ! that meek that tender smile
Is but a harbinger of death :
And pointing with a feeble hand
She says, in faint words by sighs broken,
Bear for me to my native land
This precious Flower, true love's last token.

XX.

GLAD sight wherever new with old
Is joined through some dear homeborn tie ;
The life of all that we behold
Depends upon that mystery.
Vain is the glory of the sky,
The beauty vain of field and grove
Unless, while with admiring eye
We gaze, we also learn to love.

XXI.

THE CONTRAST.

THE PARROT AND THE WREN.

I.

WITHIN her gilded cage confined,
I saw a dazzling Belle,
A Parrot of that famous kind
Whose name is NON-PAREIL.

Like beads of glossy jet her eyes ;
And, smoothed by Nature's skill,
With pearl or gleaming agate vies
Her finely-curved bill.

Her plummy mantle's living hues
In mass opposed to mass,
Outshine the splendour that imbues
The robes of pictured glass.

And, sooth to say, an apter Mate
Did never tempt the choice
Of feathered Thing most delicate
In figure and in voice.

But, exiled from Australian bowers,
And singleness her lot,
She trills her song with tutored powers,
Or mocks each casual note.

No more of pity for regrets
With which she may have striven !
Now but in wantonness she frets,
Or spite, if cause be given ;

Arch, volatile, a sportive bird
By social glee inspired ;
Ambitious to be seen or heard,
And pleased to be admired !

II.

THIS MOSS-LINED shed, green, soft, and dry,
Harbours a self-contented Wren,
Not shunning man's abode, though shy,
Almost as thought itself, of human ken.

Strange places, coverts unendeared,
She never tried ; the very nest
In which this Child of Spring was reared,
Is warmed, thro' winter, by her feathery breast.

To the bleak winds she sometimes gives
A slender unexpected strain ;
Proof that the hermitess still lives,
Though she appear not, and be sought in vain.

Say, Dora ! tell me, by yon placid moon,
If called to choose between the favoured pair,
Which would you be,—the bird of the saloon,
By lady-fingers tended with nice care,
Caressed, applauded, upon dainties fed,
Or Nature's DARKLING of this mossy shed ?

1825.

XXII.

THE DANISH BOY.

A FRAGMENT.

I.

BETWEEN two sister moorland rills
There is a spot that seems to lie
Sacred to flowerets of the hills,
And sacred to the sky.
And in this smooth and open dell
There is a tempest-stricken tree ;
A corner-stone by lightning cut,
The last stone of a lonely hut ;
And in this dell you see
A thing no storm can e'er destroy,
The shadow of a Danish Boy.

II.

In clouds above, the lark is heard,
But drops not here to earth for rest ;
Within this lonesome nook the bird
Did never build her nest.
No beast, no bird hath here his home ;
Bees, wafted on the breezy air,
Pass high above those fragrant bells
To other flowers :—to other dells
Their burthens do they bear ;
The Danish Boy walks here alone :
The lovely dell is all his own.

III.

A Spirit of noon-day is he;
 Yet seems a form of flesh and blood;
 Nor piping shepherd shall he be,
 Nor herd-boy of the wood.
 A regal vest of fur he wears,
 In colour like a raven's wing;
 It fears not rain, nor wind, nor dew;
 But in the storm tis fresh and blue
 As budding pines in spring;
 His helmet has a vernal grace,
 Fresh as the bloom upon his face.

IV.

A harp is from his shoulder slung;
 Resting the harp upon his knee;
 To words of a forgotten tongue,
 He suits its melody.
 Of flocks upon the neighbouring hill
 He is the darling and the joy;
 And often, when no cause appears,
 The mountain-ponies prick their ears,
 —They hear the Danish Boy,
 While in the dell he sings alone
 Beside the tree and corner-stone.

V.

There sits he; in his face you spy
 No trace of a ferocious air,
 Nor ever was a cloudless sky
 So steady or so fair.
 The lovely Danish Boy is blest
 And happy in his flowery cove:
 From bloody deeds his thoughts are far;
 And yet he warbles songs of war,
 That seem like songs of love,
 For calm and gentle is his mien;
 Like a dead Boy he is serene.

1799.

XXIII.

SONG

FOR THE WANDERING JEW.

THOUGH the torrents from their fountains
 Roar down many a craggy steep,
 Yet they find among the mountains
 Resting-places calm and deep.

Clouds that love through air to hasten,
 Ere the storm its fury stills,
 Helmet-like themselves will fasten
 On the heads of towering hills.

What, if through the frozen centre
 Of the Alps the Chamois bound,
 Yet he has a home to enter
 In some nook of chosen ground:

And the Sea-horse, though the ocean
 Yield him no domestic cave,
 Slumbers without sense of motion,
 Couched upon the rocking wave.

If on windy days the Raven
 Gambol like a dancing skiff,
 Not the less she loves her haven
 In the bosom of the cliff.

The fleet Ostrich, till day closes,
 Vagrant over desert sands,
 Brooding on her eggs reposes
 When chill night that care demands.

Day and night my toils redouble,
 Never nearer to the goal;
 Night and day, I feel the trouble
 Of the Wanderer in my soul.

1800

XXIV.

STRAY PLEASURES.

*'—Pleasure is spread through the earth
 In stray gifts to be claimed by whoever shall find.'*

By their floating mill,
 That lies dead and still,
 Behold yon Prisoners three,
 The Miller with two Dames, on the breast of the
 Thames!
 The platform is small, but gives room for them all;
 And they're dancing merrily.

From the shore come the notes
 To their mill where it floats,
 To their house and their mill tethered fast:
 To the small wooden isle where, their work to
 beguile,
 They from morning to even take whatever is given;—
 And many a blithe day they have past.

In sight of the spires,
 All alive with the fires
 Of the sun going down to his rest,
 In the broad open eye of the solitary sky,
 They dance,—there are three, as jocund as free,
 While they dance on the calm river's breast.

Man and Maidens wheel,
 They themselves make the reel,
 And their music's a prey which they seize;
 It plays not for them,—what matter? 'tis theirs;
 And if they had care, it has scattered their cares,
 While they dance, crying, "Long as ye please!"

They dance not for me,
 Yet mine is their glee!

Thus pleasure is spread through the earth
 In stray gifts to be claimed by whoever shall find;
 Thus a rich loving-kindness, redundantly kind,
 Moves all nature to gladness and mirth.

The showers of the spring

Rouse the birds, and they sing;
 If the wind do but stir for his proper delight,
 Each leaf, that and this, his neighbour will kiss;
 Each wave, one and t' other, speeds after his brother:
 They are happy, for that is their right!

1806.

XXV.

THE PILGRIM'S DREAM;

OR, THE STAR AND THE GLOW-WORM.

A PILGRIM, when the summer day
 Had closed upon his weary way,
 A lodging begged beneath a castle's roof;
 But him the haughty Warder spurned;
 And from the gate the Pilgrim turned,
 To seek such covert as the field
 Or heath-besprinkled copse might yield,
 Or lofty wood, shower-proof.

He paced along; and, pensively,
 Halting beneath a shady tree,
 Whose moss-grown root might serve for couch or
 seat,
 Fixed on a Star his upward eye;
 Then, from the tenant of the sky
 He turned, and watched with kindred look,
 A Glow-worm, in a dusky nook,
 Apparent at his feet.

The murmur of a neighbouring stream
 Induced a soft and slumbrous dream,
 A pregnant dream, within whose shadowy bounds
 He recognised the earth-born Star,
 And *That* which glittered from afar;
 And (strange to witness!) from the frame
 Of the ethereal Orb, there came
 Intelligible sounds.

Much did it taunt the humble Light
 That now, when day was fled, and night
 Hushed the dark earth, fast closing weary eyes,
 A very reptile could presume
 To show her taper in the gloom,
 As if in rivalry with One
 Who sate a ruler on his throne
 Erected in the skies.

"Exalted Star!" the Worm replied,
 "Abate this unbecoming pride,
 Or with a less uneasy lustre shine;
 Thou shrink'st as momentarily thy rays
 Are mastered by the breathing haze;
 While neither mist, nor thickest cloud
 That shapes in heaven its murky shroud,
 Hath power to injure mine.

But not for this do I aspire
 To match the spark of local fire,
 That at my will burns on the dewy lawn,
 With thy acknowledged glories;—No!
 Yet, thus upbraided, I may show
 What favours do attend me here,
 Till, like thyself, I disappear
 Before the purple dawn."

When this in modest guise was said,
 Across the welkin seemed to spread
 A boding sound—for aught but sleep unfit!
 Hills quaked, the rivers backward ran;
 That Star, so proud or late, looked wan;
 And reeled with visionary stir
 In the blue depth, like Lucifer
 Cast headlong to the pit!

Fire raged: and, when the spangled floor
 Of ancient ether was no more,
 New heavens succeeded, by the dream brought forth:
 And all the happy Souls that rode
 Transfigured through that fresh abode,
 Had heretofore, in humble trust,
 Shone meekly mid their native dust,
 The Glow-worms of the earth!

This knowledge, from an Angel's voice
 Proceeding, made the heart rejoice
 Of Him who slept upon the open lea:
 Waking at morn he murmured not;
 And, till life's journey closed, the spot
 Was to the Pilgrim's soul endeared,
 Where by that dream he had been cheered
 Beneath the shady tree.

1818.

XXVI.

THE

POET AND THE CAGED TURTLEDOVE.

As often as I murmur here
 My half-formed melodies,
 Straight from her osier mansion near,
 The Turtle dove replies :
 Though silent as a leaf before,
 The captive promptly coos ;
 Is it to teach her own soft lore,
 Or second my weak Muse ?

I rather think, the gentle Dove
 Is murmuring a reproof,
 Displeased that I from lays of love
 Have dared to keep aloof ;
 That I, a Bard of hill and dale,
 Have caroll'd, fancy free,
 As if nor dove nor nightingale,
 Had heart or voice for me.

If such thy meaning, O forbear,
 Sweet Bird ! to do me wrong ;
 Love, blessed Love, is every where
 The spirit of my song :
 'Mid grove, and by the calm fireside,
 Love animates my lyre—
 That coo again !—'t is not to chide,
 I feel, but to inspire.

1830.

XXVII.

A WREN'S NEST.

AMONG the dwellings framed by birds
 In field or forest with nice care,
 Is none that with the little Wren's
 In snugness may compare.

No door the tenement requires,
 And seldom needs a laboured roof ;
 Yet is it to the fiercest sun
 Impervious, and storm-proof.

So warm, so beautiful withal,
 In perfect fitness for its aim,
 That to the Kind by special grace
 Their instinct surely came.

And when for their abodes they seek
 An opportune recess,
 The hermit has no finer eye
 For shadowy quietness.

These find, 'mid ivied abbey-walls,
 A canopy in some still nook ;
 Others are pent-housed by a brae
 That overhangs a brook.

There to the brooding bird her mate
 Warbles by fits his low clear song ;
 And by the busy streamlet both
 Are sung to all day long.

Or in sequestered lanes they build,
 Where, till the flitting bird's return,
 Her eggs within the nest repose,
 Like relics in an urn.

But still, where general choice is good,
 There is a better and a best ;
 And, among fairest objects, some
 Are fairer than the rest ;

This, one of those small builders proved
 In a green covert, where, from out
 The forehead of a pollard oak,
 The leafy antlers sprout ;

For She who planned the mossy lodge,
 Mistrusting her evasive skill,
 Had to a Primrose looked for aid
 Her wishes to fulfil.

High on the trunk's projecting brow,
 And fixed an infant's span above
 The budding flowers, peeped forth the nest
 The prettiest of the grove !

The treasure proudly did I show
 To some whose minds without disdain
 Can turn to little things ; but once
 Looked up for it in vain :

'Tis gone—a ruthless spoiler's prey,
 Who heeds not beauty, love, or song,
 'Tis gone ! (so seemed it) and we grieved
 Indignant at the wrong.

Just three days after, passing by
 In clearer light the moss-built cell
 I saw, espied its shaded mouth ;
 And felt that all was well.

The Primrose for a veil had spread
 The largest of her upright leaves ;
 And thus, for purposes benign,
 A simple flower deceives.

Concealed from friends who might disturb
Thy quiet with no ill intent,
Secure from evil eyes and hands
On barbarous plunder bent,

Rest, Mother-bird ! and when thy young
Take flight, and thou art free to roam,
When withered is the guardian Flower,
And empty thy late home,

Think how ye prospered, thou and thine,
Amid the unviolated grove
Housed near the growing Primrose-tuft
In foresight, or in love.

1833.

XXVIII.

LOVE LIES BLEEDING.

You call it, "Love lies bleeding,"—so you may,
Though the red Flower, not prostrate, only droops,
As we have seen it here from day to day,
From month to month, life passing not away :
A flower how rich in sadness ! Even thus stoops,
(Sentient by Grecian sculpture's marvellous power)
Thus leans, with hanging brow and body bent
Earthward in uncomplaining languishment,
The dying Gladiator. So, sad Flower !
(Tis Fancy guides me willing to be led,
Though by a slender thread,)
So drooped Adonis bathed in sanguine dew
Of his death-wound, when he from innocent air
The gentlest breath of resignation drew ;
While Venus in a passion of despair
Rent, weeping over him, her golden hair
Spangled with drops of that celestial shower.
She suffered, as Immortals sometimes do ;
But pangs more lasting far, *that* Lover knew
Who first, weighed down by scorn, in some lone
bower

Did press this semblance of unpitied smart
Into the service of his constant heart,
His own dejection, downcast Flower ! could share
With thine, and gave the mournful name which
thou wilt ever bear.

XXIX.

COMPANION TO THE FOREGOING.

NEVER enlivened with the liveliest ray
That fosters growth or checks or cheers decay,
Nor by the heaviest rain-drops more deprest,
This Flower, that first appeared as summer's guest,

Preserves her beauty mid autumnal leaves
And to her mournful habits fondly cleaves.
When files of stateliest plants have ceased to bloom,
One after one submitting to their doom,
When her coevals each and all are fled,
What keeps her thus reclined upon her lonesome
bed ?

The old mythologists, more impress'd than we
Of this late day by character in tree
Or herb, that claimed peculiar sympathy,
Or by the silent lapse of fountain clear,
Or with the language of the viewless air
By bird or beast made vocal, sought a cause
To solve the mystery, not in Nature's laws
But in Man's fortunes. Hence a thousand tales
Sung to the plaintive lyre in Grecian vales.
Nor doubt that something of their spirit swayed
The fancy-stricken Youth or heart-sick Maid,
Who, while each stood companionless and eyed
This undeparting Flower in crimson dyed,
Thought of a wound which death is slow to cure,
A fate that has endured and will endure,
And, patience coveting yet passion feeding,
Called the dejected Lingerer, *Love lies bleeding*.

XXX.

RURAL ILLUSIONS.

SYLPH was it ? or a Bird more bright
Than those of fabulous stock ?
A second darted by ;—and lo !
Another of the flock,
Through sunshine flitting from the bough
To nestle in the rock.
Transient deception ! a gay freak
Of April's mimicries !
Those brilliant strangers, hailed with joy
Among the budding trees,
Proved last year's leaves, pushed from the spray
To frolic on the breeze.

Maternal Flora ! show thy face,
And let thy hand be seen,
Thy hand here sprinkling tiny flowers,
That, as they touch the green,
Take root (so seems it) and look up.
In honour of their Queen.
Yet, sooth, those little starry specks,
That not in vain aspired

To be confounded with live growths,
Most dainty, most admired,
Were only blossoms dropped from twigs
Of their own offspring tired.

Not such the World's illusive shows ;
Her wingless flutterings,
Her blossoms which, though shed, outbrave
The floweret as it springs,
For the undeceived, smile as they may,
Are melancholy things :
But gentle Nature plays her part
With ever-varying wiles,
And transient feignings with plain truth
So well she reconciles,
That those fond Idlers most are pleased
Whom oftenest she beguiles.

1832.

XXXI.

THE KITTEN AND FALLING LEAVES.

THAT way look, my Infant, lo !
What a pretty baby-show !
See the Kitten on the wall,
Sporting with the leaves that fall,
Withered leaves—one—two—and three—
From the lofty elder-tree !
Through the calm and frosty air
Of this morning bright and fair,
Eddying round and round they sink
Softly, slowly: one might think,
From the motions that are made,
Every little leaf conveyed
Sylph or Faery hither tending,—
To this lower world descending,
Each invisible and mute,
In his wavering parachute.
—But the Kitten, how she starts,
Crouches, stretches, paws, and darts !
First at one, and then its fellow
Just as light and just as yellow ;
There are many now—now one—
Now they stop and there are none :
What intenseness of desire
In her upward eye of fire !
With a tiger-leap half way
Now she meets the coming prey,
Lets it go as fast, and then
Has it in her power again :

Now she works with three or four,
Like an Indian conjurer ;
Quick as he in feats of art,
Far beyond in joy of heart.
Were her antics played in the eye
Of a thousand standers-by,
Clapping hands with shout and stare,
What would little Tabby care
For the plaudits of the crowd ?
Over happy to be proud,
Over wealthy in the treasure
Of her own exceeding pleasure !

'Tis a pretty baby-treat ;
Nor, I deem, for me unmeet ;
Here, for neither Babe nor me,
Other play-mate can I see.
Of the countless living things,
That with stir of feet and wings
(In the sun or under shade,
Upon bough or grassy blade)
And with busy revellings,
Chirp and song, and murmurings,
Made this orchard's narrow space,
And this vale so blithe a place ;
Multitudes are swept away
Never more to breathe the day :
Some are sleeping ; some in bands
Travelled into distant lands ;
Others slunk to moor and wood,
Far from human neighbourhood ;
And, among the Kinds that keep
With us closer fellowship,
With us openly abide,
All have laid their mirth aside.

Where is he that giddy Sprite,
Blue-cap, with his colours bright,
Who was blest as bird could be,
Feeding in the apple-tree ;
Made such wanton spoil and rout,
Turning blossoms inside out ;
Hung—head pointing towards the ground—
Fluttered, perched, into a round
Bound himself, and then unbound ;
Lithest, gaudiest Harlequin !
Prettiest Tumbler ever seen !
Light of heart and light of limb ;
What is now become of Him ?
Lambs, that through the mountains went
Frisking, bleating merriment,
When the year was in its prime,
They are sobered by this time.
If you look to vale or hill,

If you listen, all is still,
 Save a little neighbouring rill,
 That from out the rocky ground
 Strikes a solitary sound.
 Vainly glitter hill and plain,
 And the air is calm in vain ;
 Vainly Morning spreads the lure
 Of a sky serene and pure ;
 Creature none can she decoy
 Into open sign of joy :
 Is it that they have a fear
 Of the dreary season near ?
 Or that other pleasures be
 Sweeter even than gaiety ?

Yet, whate'er enjoyments dwell
 In the impenetrable cell
 Of the silent heart which Nature
 Furnishes to every creature ;
 Whatsoe'er we feel and know
 Too sedate for outward show,
 Such a light of gladness breaks,
 Pretty Kitten! from thy freaks,—
 Spreads with such a living grace
 O'er my little Laura's face ;
 Yes, the sight so stirs and charms
 Thee, Baby, laughing in my arms,
 That almost I could repine
 That your transports are not mine,
 That I do not wholly fare
 Even as ye do, thoughtless pair !
 And I will have my careless season
 Spite of melancholy reason,
 Will walk through life in such a way
 That, when time brings on decay,
 Now and then I may possess
 Hours of perfect gladness.
 —Pleased by any random toy ;
 By a kitten's busy joy,
 Or an infant's laughing eye
 Sharing in the ecstasy ;
 I would fare like that or this,
 Find my wisdom in my bliss ;
 Keep the sprightly soul awake,
 And have faculties to take,
 Even from things by sorrow wrought,
 Matter for a jocund thought,
 Spite of care, and spite of grief,
 To gambol with Life's falling Leaf.

1804.

XXXII.

ADDRESS TO MY INFANT DAUGHTER, DORA,

ON BEING REMINDED THAT SHE WAS A MONTH OLD THAT
 DAY, SEPTEMBER 16.

—————Hast thou then survived—
 Mild Offspring of infirm humanity,
 Meek Infant ! among all forlornest things
 The most forlorn—one life of that bright star,
 The second glory of the Heavens ?—Thou hast ;
 Already hast survived that great decay,
 That transformation through the wide earth felt,
 And by all nations. In that Being's sight
 From whom the Race of human kind proceed,
 A thousand years are but as yesterday ;
 And one day's narrow circuit is to Him
 Not less capacious than a thousand years.
 But what is time ? What outward glory ? neither
 A measure is of Thee, whose claims extend
 Through 'heaven's eternal year.'—Yethail to Thee,
 Frail, feeble, Monthling !—by that name, methinks,
 Thy scanty breathing-time is portioned out
 Not idly.—Hadst thou been of Indian birth,
 Couched on a casual bed of moss and leaves,
 And rudely canopied by leafy boughs,
 Or to the churlish elements exposed
 On the blank plains,—the coldness of the night,
 Or the night's darkness, or its cheerful face
 Of beauty, by the changing moon adorned,
 Would, with imperious admonition, then
 Have scored thine age, and punctually timed
 Thine infant history, on the minds of those
 Who might have wandered with thee.—Mother's
 love,
 Nor less than mother's love in other breasts,
 Will, among us warm-clad and warmly housed,
 Do for thee what the finger of the heavens
 Doth all too often harshly execute
 For thy unblest coveals, amid wilds
 Where fancy hath small liberty to grace
 The affections, to exalt them or refine ;
 And the maternal sympathy itself,
 Though strong, is, in the main, a joyless tie
 Of naked instinct, wound about the heart.
 Happier, far happier is thy lot and ours !
 Even now—to solemnise thy helpless state,
 And to enliven in the mind's regard
 Thy passive beauty—parallels have risen,
 Resemblances, or contrasts, that connect,
 Within the region of a father's thoughts,
 Thee and thy mate and sister of the sky.
 And first ;—thy sinless progress, through a world
 By sorrow darkened and by care disturbed,
 Apt likeness bears to hers, through gathered clouds,

Moving untouched in silver purity,
 And cheering oft-times their reluctant gloom.
 Fair are ye both, and both are free from stain :
 But thou, how leisurely thou fill'st thy horn
 With brightness ! leaving her to post along,
 And range about, disquieted in change,
 And still impatient of the shape she wears.
 Once up, once down the hill, one journey, Babe
 That will suffice thee ; and it seems that now
 Thou hast fore-knowledge that such task is thine ;
 Thou travellest so contentedly, and sleep'st
 In such a heedless peace. Alas ! full soon
 Hath this conception, grateful to behold,
 Changed countenance, like an object sullied o'er
 By breathing mist ; and thine appears to be

A mournful labour, while to her is given
 Hope, and a renovation without end.
 —That smile forbids the thought ; for on thy face
 Smiles are beginning, like the beams of dawn,
 To shoot and circulate ; smiles have there been seen ;
 Tranquil assurances that Heaven supports
 The feeble motions of thy life, and cheers
 Thy loneliness : or shall those smiles be called
 Feelers of love, put forth as if to explore
 This untried world, and to prepare thy way
 Through a strait passage intricate and dim ?
 Such are they ; and the same are tokens, signs,
 Which, when the appointed season hath arrived,
 Joy, as her holiest language, shall adopt ;
 And Reason's godlike Power be proud to own.

1804.

XXXIII.

THE WAGGONER.

In Cairo's crowded streets
 The impatient Merchant, wondering, waits in vain,
 And Mecca saddens at the long delay.

THOMSON.

TO

CHARLES LAMB, ESQ.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

WHEN I sent you, a few weeks ago, the Tale of Peter Bell, you asked 'why THE WAGGONER was not added ?'
 —To say the truth,—from the higher tone of imagination, and the deeper touches of passion aimed at in the former, I apprehended, this little Piece could not accompany it without disadvantage. In the year 1806, if I am not mistaken, THE WAGGONER was read to you in manuscript, and, as you have remembered it for so long a time, I am the more encouraged to hope, that, since the localities on which the Poem partly depends did not prevent its being interesting to you, it may prove acceptable to others. Being therefore in some measure the cause of its present appearance, you must allow me the gratification of inscribing it to you ; in acknowledgment of the pleasure I have derived from your Writings, and of the high esteem with which

I am very truly yours,

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

Rydal Mount, May 20, 1819.

CANTO FIRST.

'Tis spent—this burning day of June !
 Soft darkness o'er its latest gleams is stealing ;
 The buzzing dor-hawk, round and round, is wheel-
 ing,—
 That solitary bird
 Is all that can be heard
 In silence deeper far than that of deepest noon !

Confiding Glow-worms, 'tis a night
 Propitious to your earth-born light !
 But, where the scattered stars are seen
 In hazy straits the clouds between,
 Each, in his station twinkling not,
 Seems changed into a pallid spot.
 The mountains against heaven's grave weight
 Rise up, and grow to wondrous height.

The air, as in a lion's den,
 Is close and hot ;—and now and then
 Comes a tired and sultry breeze
 With a haunting and a panting,
 Like the stifling of disease ;
 But the dews allay the heat,
 And the silence makes it sweet.

Hush, there is some one on the stir !
 'Tis Benjamin the Waggoner ;
 Who long hath trod this toilsome way,
 Companion of the night and day.
 That far-off tinkling's drowsy cheer,
 Mix'd with a faint yet grating sound
 In a moment lost and found,
 The Wain announces—by whose side
 Along the banks of Rydal Mere
 He paces on, a trusty Guide,—

Listen ! you can scarcely hear !
 Hither he his course is bending ;—
 Now he leaves the lower ground,
 And up the craggy hill ascending
 Many a stop and stay he makes,
 Many a breathing-fit he takes ;—
 Steep the way and wearisome,
 Yet all the while his whip is dumb !

The Horses have worked with right good-will,
 And so have gained the top of the hill ;
 He was patient, they were strong,
 And now they smoothly glide along,
 Recovering breath, and pleased to win
 The praises of mild Benjamin.
 Heaven shield him from mishap and snare !
 But why so early with this prayer ?—
 Is it for threatenings in the sky ?
 Or for some other danger nigh ?
 No ; none is near him yet, though he
 Be one of much infirmity ;
 For at the bottom of the brow,
 Where once the DOVE and OLIVE-BOUGH
 Offered a greeting of good ale
 To all who entered Grasmere Vale ;
 And called on him who must depart
 To leave it with a jovial heart ;
 There, where the DOVE and OLIVE-BOUGH
 Once hung, a Poet harbours now,
 A simple water-drinking Bard ;
 Why need our Hero then (though frail
 His best resolves) be on his guard ?
 He marches by, secure and bold ;
 Yet while he thinks on times of old,
 It seems that all looks wondrous cold ;
 He shrugs his shoulders, shakes his head,
 And, for the honest folk within,
 It is a doubt with Benjamin
 Whether they be alive or dead !

Here is no danger,—none at all !
 Beyond his wish he walks secure ;
 But pass a mile—and *then* for trial,—
 Then for the pride of self-denial ;
 If he resist that tempting door,
 Which with such friendly voice will call ;
 If he resist those casement panes,
 And that bright gleam which thence will fall
 Upon his Leaders' bells and manes,
 Inviting him with cheerful lure :
 For still, though all be dark elsewhere,
 Some shining notice will be *there*,
 Of open house and ready fare.

The place to Benjamin right well
 Is known, and by as strong a spell
 As used to be that sign of love
 And hope—the OLIVE-BOUGH and DOVE ;
 He knows it to his cost, good Man !
 Who does not know the famous SWAN ?
 Object uncouth ! and yet our boast,
 For it was painted by the Host ;
 His own conceit the figure planned,
 'Twas coloured all by his own hand ;
 And that frail Child of thirsty clay,
 Of whom I sing this rustic lay,
 Could tell with self-dissatisfaction
 Quaint stories of the bird's attraction !*

Well ! that is past—and in despite
 Of open door and shining light.
 And now the conqueror essays
 The long ascent of Dunmail-raise ;
 And with his team is gentle here
 As when he clomb from Rydal Mere ;
 His whip they do not dread—his voice
 They only hear it to rejoice.
 To stand or go is at *their* pleasure ;
 Their efforts and their time they measure
 By generous pride within the breast ;
 And, while they strain, and while they rest,
 He thus pursues his thoughts at leisure.

Now am I fairly safe to-night—
 And with proud cause my heart is light :
 I trespassed lately worse than ever—
 But Heaven has blest a good endeavour ;
 And, to my soul's content, I find
 The evil One is left behind.
 Yes, let my master fume and fret,
 Here am I—with my horses yet !
 My jolly team, he finds that ye
 Will work for nobody but me !
 Full proof of this the Country gained ;
 It knows how ye were vexed and strained,
 And forced unworthy stripes to bear,
 When trusted to another's care.
 Here was it—on this rugged slope,
 Which now ye climb with heart and hope,
 I saw you, between rage and fear,
 Plunge, and fling back a spiteful ear,
 And ever more and more confused,
 As ye were more and more abused :
 As chance would have it, passing by
 I saw you in that jeopardy :

* This rude piece of self-taught art (such is the progress of refinement) has been supplanted by a professional production.

A word from me was like a charm ;
 Ye pulled together with one mind ;
 And your huge burthen, safe from harm,
 Moved like a vessel in the wind !
 —Yes, without me, up hills so high
 'Tis vain to strive for mastery.
 Then grieve not, jolly team ! though tough
 The road we travel, steep, and rough ;
 Though Rydal-heights and Dunmail-raise,
 And all their fellow banks and braes,
 Full often make you stretch and strain,
 And halt for breath and halt again,
 Yet to their sturdiness 'tis owing
 That side by side we still are going !

While Benjamin in earnest mood
 His meditations thus pursued,
 A storm, which had been smothered long,
 Was growing inwardly more strong ;
 And, in its struggles to get free,
 Was busily employed as he.
 The thunder had begun to growl—
 He heard not, too intent of soul ;
 The air was now without a breath—
 He marked not that 'twas still as death.
 But soon large rain-drops on his head
 Fell with the weight of drops of lead ;—
 He starts—and takes, at the admonition,
 A sage survey of his condition.
 The road is black before his eyes,
 Glimmering faintly where it lies ;
 Black is the sky—and every hill,
 Up to the sky, is blacker still—
 Sky, hill, and dale, one dismal room,
 Hung round and overhung with gloom ;
 Save that above a single height
 Is to be seen a lurid light,
 Above Helm-crag *—a streak half dead,
 A burning of portentous red ;
 And near that lurid light, full well
 The ASTROLOGER, sage Sidrophel,
 Where at his desk and book he sits,
 Puzzling aloft his curious wits ;
 He whose domain is held in common
 With no one but the ANCIENT WOMAN,
 Cowering beside her rifted cell,
 As if intent on magic spell ;—
 Dread pair, that, spite of wind and weather,
 Still sit upon Helm-crag together !

The ASTROLOGER was not unseen
 By solitary Benjamin ;
 But total darkness came anon,
 And he and every thing was gone :
 And suddenly a ruffling breeze,
 (That would have rocked the sounding trees
 Had aught of sylvan growth been there)
 Swept through the Hollow long and bare :
 The rain rushed down—the road was battered,
 As with the force of billows shattered ;
 The horses are dismayed, nor know
 Whether they should stand or go ;
 And Benjamin is groping near them,
 Sees nothing, and can scarcely hear them.
 He is astounded,—wonder not,—
 With such a charge in such a spot ;
 Astounded in the mountain gap
 With thunder-peals, clap after clap,
 Close-treading on the silent flashes—
 And somewhere, as he thinks, by crashes
 Among the rocks ; with weight of rain,
 And sullen motions long and slow,
 That to a dreary distance go—
 Till, breaking in upon the dying strain,
 A rending o'er his head begins the fray again.

Meanwhile, uncertain what to do,
 And oftentimes compelled to halt,
 The horses cautiously pursue
 Their way, without mishap or fault ;
 And now have reached that pile of stones,
 Heaped over brave King Dunmail's bones ;
 He who had once supreme command,
 Last king of rocky Cumberland ;
 His bones, and those of all his Power,
 Slain here in a disastrous hour !

When, passing through this narrow strait,
 Stony, and dark, and desolate,
 Benjamin can faintly hear
 A voice that comes from some one near,
 A female voice :—" Whoe'er you be,
 Stop," it exclaimed, " and pity me !"
 And, less in pity than in wonder,
 Amid the darkness and the thunder,
 The Waggoner, with prompt command,
 Summons his horses to a stand.

While, with increasing agitation,
 The Woman urged her supplication,
 In rueful words, with sobs between—
 The voice of tears that fell unseen ;
 There came a flash—a startling glare,
 And all Seat-Sandal was laid bare !

* A mountain of Grasmere, the broken summit of which presents two figures, full as distinctly shaped as that of the famous Cobbler near Arroquhar in Scotland.

'Tis not a time for nice suggestion,
And Benjamin, without a question,
Taking her for some way-worn rover,
Said, "Mount, and get you under cover!"

Another voice, in tone as hoarse
As a swollen brook with rugged course,
Cried out, "Good brother, why so fast?
I've had a glimpse of you—*avast!*
Or, since it suits you to be civil,
Take her at once—for good and evil!"

"It is my Husband," softly said
The Woman, as if half afraid:
By this time she was snug within,
Through help of honest Benjamin;
She and her Babe, which to her breast
With thankfulness the Mother pressed;
And now the same strong voice more near
Said cordially, "My Friend, what cheer?
Rough doings these! as God's my judge,
The sky owes somebody a grudge!
We've had in half an hour or less
A twelvemonth's terror and distress!"

Then Benjamin entreats the Man
Would mount, too, quickly as he can:
The Sailor—Sailor now no more,
But such he had been heretofore—
To courteous Benjamin replied,
"Go you your way, and mind not me;
For I must have, whate'er betide,
My Ass and fifty things beside,—
Go, and I'll follow speedily!"

The Waggon moves—and with its load
Descends along the sloping road;
And the rough Sailor instantly
Turns to a little tent hard by:
For when, at closing-in of day,
The family had come that way,
Green pasture and the soft warm air
Tempted them to settle there.—
Green is the grass for beast to graze,
Around the stones of Dunmail-raise!

The Sailor gathers up his bed,
Takes down the canvass overhead;
And, after farewell to the place,
A parting word—though not of grace,
Pursues, with Ass and all his store,
The way the Waggon went before.

CANTO SECOND.

If Wytheburn's modest House of prayer,
As lowly as the lowliest dwelling,
Had, with its belfry's humble stock,
A little pair that hang in air,
Been mistress also of a clock,
(And one, too, not in crazy plight)
Twelve strokes that clock would have been telling
Under the brow of old Helvellyn—
Its bead-roll of midnight,
Then, when the Hero of my tale
Was passing by, and, down the vale
(The vale now silent, hushed I ween
As if a storm had never been)
Proceeding with a mind at ease;
While the old Familiar of the seas
Intent to use his utmost haste,
Gained ground upon the Waggon fast,
And gives another lusty cheer;
For spite of rumbling of the wheels,
A welcome greeting he can hear;—
It is a fiddle in its glee
Dinning from the CHERRY TREE!

Thence the sound—the light is there—
As Benjamin is now aware,
Who, to his inward thoughts confined,
Had almost reached the festive door,
When, startled by the Sailor's roar,
He hears a sound and sees the light,
And in a moment calls to mind
That 'tis the village MERRY-NIGHT!*

Although before in no dejection,
At this insidious recollection
His heart with sudden joy is filled,—
His ears are by the music thrilled,
His eyes take pleasure in the road
Glittering before him bright and broad;
And Benjamin is wet and cold,
And there are reasons manifold
That make the good, tow'rds which he's yearning,
Look fairly like a lawful earning.

Nor has thought time to come and go,
To vibrate between yes and no;
For, cries the Sailor, "Glorious chance
That blew us hither!—let him dance,
Who can or will!—my honest soul,
Our treat shall be a friendly bowl!"

* A term well known in the North of England, and applied to rural Festivals where young persons meet in the evening for the purpose of dancing.

He draws him to the door—"Come in,
Come, come," cries he to Benjamin !
And Benjamin—ah, woe is me !
Gave the word—the horses heard
And halted, though reluctantly.

'Blithe souls and lightsome hearts have we,
Feasting at the CHERRY TREE !'
This was the outside proclamation,
This was the inside salutation ;
What bustling—jostling—high and low !
A universal overflow !
What tankards foaming from the tap !
What store of cakes in every lap !
What thumping—stumping—overhead !
The thunder had not been more busy :
With such a stir you would have said,
This little place may well be dizzy !
'Tis who can dance with greatest vigour—
'Tis what can be most prompt and eager ;
As if it heard the fiddle's call,
The pewter clatters on the wall ;
The very bacon shows it feeling,
Swinging from the smoky ceiling !

A steaming bowl, a blazing fire,
What greater good can heart desire ?
'Twere worth a wise man's while to try
The utmost anger of the sky :
To seek for thoughts of a gloomy cast,
If such the bright amends at last.
Now should you say I judge amiss,
The CHERRY TREE shows proof of this ;
For soon of all the happy there,
Our Travellers are the happiest pair ;
All care with Benjamin is gone—
A Caesar past the Rubicon !
He thinks not of his long, long, strife ;—
The Sailor, Man by nature gay,
Hath no resolves to throw away ;
And he hath now forgot his Wife,
Hath quite forgotten her—or may be
Thinks her the luckiest soul on earth,
Within that warm and peaceful berth,
Under cover,
Terror over,
Sleeping by her sleeping Baby.

With bowl that sped from hand to hand,
The gladdest of the gladsome band,
Amid their own delight and fun,
They hear—when every dance is done,
When every whirling bout is o'er—

The fiddle's *squeak**—that call to bliss,
Ever followed by a kiss ;
They envy not the happy lot,
But enjoy their own the more !

While thus our jocund Travellers fare,
Up springs the Sailor from his chair—
Limps (for I might have told before
That he was lame) across the floor—
Is gone—returns—and with a prize ;
With what ?—a Ship of lusty size ;
A gallant stately Man-of-war,
Fixed on a smoothly-sliding car.
Surprise to all, but most surprise
To Benjamin, who rubs his eyes,
Not knowing that he had befriended
A Man so gloriously attended !

"This," cries the Sailor, "a Third-rate is—
Stand back, and you shall see her gratis !
This was the Flag-ship at the Nile,
The Vanguard—you may smirk and smile,
But, pretty Maid, if you look near,
You'll find you've much in little here !
A nobler ship did never swim,
And you shall see her in full trim :
I'll set, my friends, to do you honour,
Set every inch of sail upon her."
So said, so done ; and masts, sails, yards,
He names them all ; and interlards
His speech with uncouth terms of art,
Accomplished in the showman's part ;
And then, as from a sudden check,
Cries out—" 'Tis there, the quarter-deck
On which brave Admiral Nelson stood—
A sight that would have roused your blood !
One eye he had, which, bright as ten,
Burned like a fire among his men ;
Let this be land, and that be sea,
Here lay the French—and *thus* came we !"

Hushed was by this the fiddle's sound,
The dancers all were gathered round,
And, such the stillness of the house,
You might have heard a nibbling mouse ;
While, borrowing helps where'er he may,
The Sailor through the story runs
Of ships to ships and guns to guns ;
And does his utmost to display
The dismal conflict, and the might
And terror of that marvellous night !

* At the close of each strathspey, or jig, a particular note from the fiddle summons the Rustic to the agreeable duty of saluting his partner.

"A bowl, a bowl of double measure,"
 Cries Benjamin, "a draught of length,
 To Nelson, England's pride and treasure,
 Her bulwark and her tower of strength!"
 When Benjamin had seized the bowl,
 The mastiff, from beneath the waggon,
 Where he lay, watchful as a dragon,
 Rattled his chain;—'twas all in vain,
 For Benjamin, triumphant soul!
 He heard the monitory growl;
 Heard—and in opposition quaffed
 A deep, determined, desperate draught!
 Nor did the battered Tar forget,
 Or flinch from what he deemed his debt:
 Then, like a hero crowned with laurel,
 Back to her place the ship he led;
 Wheeled her back in full apparel;
 And so, flag flying at mast head,
 Re-yoked her to the Ass:—anon,
 Cries Benjamin, "We must be gone."
 Thus, after two hours' hearty stay,
 Again behold them on their way!

CANTO THIRD.

RIGHT gladly had the horses stirred,
 When they the wished-for greeting heard,
 The whip's loud notice from the door,
 That they were free to move once more.
 You think, those doings must have bred
 In them disheartening doubts and dread;
 No, not a horse of all the eight,
 Although it be a moonless night,
 Fears either for himself or freight;
 For this they know (and let it hide,
 In part, the offences of their guide)
 That Benjamin, with clouded brains,
 Is worth the best with all their pains;
 And, if they had a prayer to make,
 The prayer would be that they may take
 With him whatever comes in course,
 The better fortune or the worse;
 That no one else may have business near them,
 And, drunk or sober, he may steer them.

So, forth in dauntless mood they fare,
 And with them goes the guardian pair.

Now, heroes, for the true commotion,
 The triumph of your late devotion!
 Can aught on earth impede delight,
 Still mounting to a higher height;
 And higher still—a greedy flight!

Can any low-born care pursue her,
 Can any mortal clog come to her?
 No notion have they—not a thought,
 That is from joyless regions brought!
 And, while they coast the silent lake,
 Their inspiration I partake;
 Share their empyreal spirits—yea,
 With their enraptured vision, see—
 O fancy—what a jubilee!
 What shifting pictures—clad in gleams
 Of colour bright as feverish dreams!
 Earth, spangled sky, and lake serene,
 Involved and restless all—a scene
 Pregnant with mutual exaltation,
 Rich change, and multiplied creation!
 This sight to me the Muse imparts;—
 And then, what kindness in their hearts!
 What tears of rapture, what vow-making,
 Profound entreaties, and hand-shaking!
 What solemn, vacant, interlacing,
 As if they'd fall asleep embracing!
 Then, in the turbulence of glee,
 And in the excess of amity,
 Says Benjamin, "That Ass of thine,
 He spoils thy sport, and hinders mine:
 If he were tethered to the waggon,
 He'd drag as well what he is dragging;
 And we, as brother should with brother
 Might trudge it alongside each other!"

Forthwith, obedient to command,
 The horses made a quiet stand;
 And to the waggon's skirts was tied
 The Creature, by the Mastiff's side,
 The Mastiff wondering, and perplexed
 With dread of what will happen next;
 And thinking it but sorry cheer,
 To have such company so near!

This new arrangement made, the Wain
 Through the still night proceeds again;
 No Moon hath risen her light to lend;
 But indistinctly may be kenned
 The VANGUARD, following close behind,
 Sails spread, as if to catch the wind!

"Thy wife and child are snug and warm,
 Thy ship will travel without harm;
 I like," said Benjamin, "her shape and stature:
 And this of mine—this bulky creature
 Of which I have the steering—this,
 Seen fairly, is not much amiss!
 We want your streamers, friend, you know;
 But, altogether as we go,

We make a kind of handsome show !
 Among these hills, from first to last,
 We've weathered many a furious blast ;
 Hard passage forcing on, with head
 Against the storm, and canvass spread.
 I hate a boaster ; but to thee
 Will say 't, who know'st both land and sea,
 The unluckiest hulk that stems the brine
 Is hardly worse beset than mine,
 When cross-winds on her quarter beat ;
 And, fairly lifted from my feet,
 I stagger onward—heaven knows how ;
 But not so pleasantly as now :
 Poor pilot I, by snows confounded,
 And many a foundrous pit surrounded !
 Yet here we are, by night and day
 Grinding through rough and smooth our way ;
 Through foul and fair our task fulfilling ;
 And long shall be so yet—God willing !”

“Ay,” said the Tar, “through fair and foul—
 But save us from yon screeching owl !”
 That instant was begun a fray
 Which called their thoughts another way :
 The mastiff, ill-conditioned carl !
 What must he do but growl and snarl,
 Still more and more dissatisfied
 With the meek comrade at his side !
 Till, not incensed though put to proof,
 The Ass, uplifting a hind hoof,
 Salutes the Mastiff on the head ;
 And so were better manners bred,
 And all was calmed and quieted.

“Yon screech-owl,” says the Sailor, turning
 Back to his former cause of mourning,
 “Yon owl !—pray God that all be well !
 'Tis worse than any funeral bell ;
 As sure as I've the gift of sight,
 We shall be meeting ghosts to-night !”
 —Said Benjamin, “This whip shall lay
 A thousand, if they cross our way.
 I know that Wanton's noisy station,
 I know him and his occupation ;
 The jolly bird hath learned his cheer
 Upon the banks of Windermere ;
 Where a tribe of them make merry,
 Mocking the Man that keeps the ferry ;
 Halloooing from an open throat,
 Like travellers shouting for a boat.
 —The tricks he learned at Windermere
 This vagrant owl is playing here—
 That is the worst of his employment :
 He's at the top of his enjoyment !”

This explanation stilled the alarm,
 Cured the foreboder like a charm ;
 This, and the manner, and the voice,
 Summoned the Sailor to rejoice ;
 His heart is up—he fears no evil
 From life or death, from man or devil ;
 He wheels—and, making many stops,
 Brandished his crutch against the mountain tops ;
 And, while he talked of blows and scars,
 Benjamin, among the stars,
 Beheld a dancing—and a glancing ;
 Such retreating and advancing
 As, I ween, was never seen
 In bloodiest battle since the days of Mars !

CANTO FOURTH.

Thus they, with freaks of proud delight,
 Beguile the remnant of the night ;
 And many a snatch of jovial song
 Regales them as they wind along ;
 While to the music, from on high,
 The echoes make a glad reply.—
 But the sage Muse the revel heeds
 No farther than her story needs ;
 Nor will she servilely attend
 The loitering journey to its end.
 —Blithe spirits of her own impel
 The Muse, who scents the morning air,
 To take of this transported pair
 A brief and unproved farewell ;
 To quit the slow-paced waggon's side,
 And wander down yon hawthorn dell,
 With murmuring Greta for her guide.
 —There doth she ken the awful form
 Of Raven-crag—black as a storm—
 Glimmering through the twilight pale ;
 And Ghimmer-crag, * his tall twin brother,
 Each peering forth to meet the other :—
 And, while she roves through St. John's Vale,
 Along the smooth unpathwayed plain,
 By sheep-track or through cottage lane,
 Where no disturbance comes to intrude
 Upon the pensive solitude,
 Her unsuspecting eye, perchance,
 With the rude shepherd's favoured glance,
 Beholds the faeries in array,
 Whose party-coloured garments gay
 The silent company betray :
 Red, green, and blue ; a moment's sight !
 For Skiddaw-top with rosy light
 Is touched—and all the band take flight.

* The crag of the ewe lamb.

— Fly also, Muse! and from the dell
 Mount to the ridge of Nathdale Fell;
 Thence, look thou forth o'er wood and lawn
 Hoar with the frost-like dews of dawn;
 Across yon meadowy bottom look,
 Where close fogs hide their parent brook;
 And see, beyond that hamlet small,
 The ruined towers of Threlkeld-hall,
 Lurking in a double shade,
 By trees and lingering twilight made!
 There, at Blencathara's rugged feet,
 Sir Lancelot gave a safe retreat
 To noble Clifford; from annoy
 Concealed the persecuted boy,
 Well pleased in rustic garb to feed
 His flock, and pipe on shepherd's reed
 Among this multitude of hills,
 Craggs, woodlands, waterfalls, and rills;
 Which soon the morning shall enfold,
 From east to west, in ample vest
 Of massy gloom and radiance bold.

The mists, that o'er the streamlet's bed
 Hung low, begin to rise and spread;
 Even while I speak, their skirts of grey
 Are smitten by a silver ray;
 And lo!—up Castrigg's naked steep
 (Where, smoothly urged, the vapours sweep
 Along—and scatter and divide,
 Like fleecy clouds self-multiplied)
 The stately waggon is ascending,
 With faithful Benjamin attending,
 Apparent now beside his team—
 Now lost amid a glittering steam:
 And with him goes his Sailor-friend,
 By this time near their journey's end;
 And, after their high-minded riot,
 Sickening into thoughtful quiet;
 As if the morning's pleasant hour,
 Had for their joys a killing power.
 And, sooth, for Benjamin a vein
 Is opened of still deeper pain
 As if his heart by notes were stung
 From out the lowly hedge-rows flung;
 As if the warbler lost in light
 Reproved his soarings of the night,
 In strains of rapture pure and holy
 Upbraided his distempered folly.

Drooping is he, his step is dull;
 But the horses stretch and pull;
 With increasing vigour climb,
 Eager to repair lost time;
 Whether, by their own desert,

Knowing what cause there is for shame,
 They are labouring to avert
 As much as may be of the blame,
 Which, they foresee, must soon alight
 Upon *his* head, whom, in despite
 Of all his failings, they love best;
 Whether for him they are distressed,
 Or, by length of fasting roused,
 Are impatient to be housed:
 Up against the hill they strain
 Tugging at the iron chain,
 Tugging all with might and main,
 Last and foremost, every horse
 To the utmost of his force!
 And the smoke and respiration,
 Rising like an exhalation,
 Blend with the mist—a moving shroud
 To form, an undissolving cloud;
 Which, with slant ray, the merry sun
 Takes delight to play upon.
 Never golden-haired Apollo,
 Pleased some favourite chief to follow
 Through accidents of peace or war,
 In a perilous moment threw
 Around the object of his care
 Veil of such celestial hue;
 Interposed so bright a screen—
 Him and his enemies between!

Alas! what boots it?—who can hide,
 When the malicious Fates are bent
 On working out an ill intent?
 Can destiny be turned aside?
 No—sad progress of my story!
 Benjamin, this outward glory
 Cannot shield thee from thy Master,
 Who from Keswick has pricked forth,
 Sour and surly as the north;
 And, in fear of some disaster,
 Comes to give what help he may,
 And to hear what thou canst say;
 If, as needs he must forebode,
 Thou hast been loitering on the road!
 His fears, his doubts, may now take flight—
 The wished-for object is in sight;
 Yet, trust the Muse, it rather hath
 Stirred him up to livelier wrath;
 Which he stifles, moody man!
 With all the patience that he can;
 To the end that, at your meeting,
 He may give thee decent greeting.

There he is—resolved to stop,
 Till the waggon gains the top;

But stop he cannot—must advance :
 Him Benjamin, with lucky glance,
 Espies—and instantly is ready,
 Self-collected, poised, and steady :
 And, to be the better seen,
 Issues from his radiant shroud,
 From his close-attending cloud,
 With careless air and open mien.
 Ereect his port, and firm his going ;
 So struts yon cock that now is crowing ;
 And the morning light in grace
 Strikes upon his lifted face,
 Hurrying the pallid hue away
 That might his trespasses betray.
 But what can all avail to clear him,
 Or what need of explanation,
 Parley or interrogation ?
 For the Master sees, alas !
 That unhappy Figure near him,
 Limping o'er the dewy grass,
 Where the road it fringes, sweet,
 Soft and cool to way-worn feet ;
 And, O indignity ! an Ass,
 By his noble Mastiff's side,
 Tethered to the waggon's tail :
 And the ship, in all her pride,
 Following after in full sail !
 Not to speak of babe and mother ;
 Who, contented with each other,
 And snug as birds in leafy arbour,
 Find, within, a blessed harbour !

With eager eyes the Master pries ;
 Looks in and out, and through and through ;
 Says nothing—till at last he spies
 A wound upon the Mastiff's head,
 A wound, where plainly might be read
 What feats an Ass's hoof can do !
 But drop the rest :—this aggravation,
 This complicated provocation,
 A hoard of grievances unsealed ;
 All past forgiveness it repealed ;
 And thus, and through distempered blood
 On both sides, Benjamin the good,
 The patient, and the tender-hearted,
 Was from his team and waggon parted ;
 When duty of that day was o'er,
 Laid down his whip—and served no more.—
 Nor could the waggon long survive,
 Which Benjamin had ceased to drive :
 It lingered on ;—guide after guide
 Ambitiously the office tried ;
 But each unmanageable hill
 Called for *his* patience and *his* skill ;—

And sure it is, that through this night,
 And what the morning brought to light,
 Two losses had we to sustain,
 We lost both WAGGONER and WAIN !

Accept, O Friend, for praise or blame,
 The gift of this adventurous song ;
 A record which I dared to frame,
 Though timid scruples checked me long ;
 They checked me—and I left the theme
 Untouched ;—in spite of many a gleam
 Of fancy which thereon was shed,
 Like pleasant sunbeams shifting still
 Upon the side of a distant hill :
 But Nature might not be gainsaid ;
 For what I have and what I miss
 I sing of these ;—it makes my bliss !
 Nor is it I who play the part,
 But a shy spirit in my heart,
 That comes and goes—will sometimes leap
 From hiding-places ten years deep ;
 Or haunts me with familiar face,
 Returning, like a ghost unlad,
 Until the debt I owe be paid.
 Forgive me, then ; for I had been
 On friendly terms with this Machine :
 In him, while he was wont to trace
 Our roads, through many a long year's space,
 A living almanack had we ;
 We had a speaking diary,
 That in this uneventful place,
 Gave to the days a mark and name
 By which we knew them when they came.
 —Yes, I, and all about me here,
 Through all the changes of the year,
 Had seen him through the mountains go,
 In pomp of mist or pomp of snow,
 Majestically huge and slow :
 Or, with a milder grace adorning
 The landscape of a summer's morning ;
 While Grasmere smoothed her liquid plain
 The moving image to detain ;
 And mighty Fairfield, with a chime
 Of echoes, to his march kept time ;
 When little other business stirred,
 And little other sound was heard ;
 In that delicious hour of balm,
 Stillness, solitude, and calm,
 While yet the valley is arrayed,
 On this side with a sober shade ;
 On that is prodigally bright—
 Crag, lawn, and wood—with rosy light.

—But most of all, thou lordly Wain !
I wish to have thee here again,
When windows flap and chimney roars,
And all is dismal out of doors ;
And, sitting by my fire, I see
Eight sorry carts, no less a train !
Unworthy successors of thee,
Come straggling through the wind and rain :
And oft, as they pass slowly on,
Beneath my windows, one by one,
See, perched upon the naked height
The summit of a cumbrous freight,
A single traveller—and there
Another ; then perhaps a pair—

The lame, the sickly, and the old ;
Men, women, heartless with the cold ;
And babes in wet and starveling plight ;
Which once, be weather as it might,
Had still a nest within a nest,
Thy shelter—and their mother's breast !
Then most of all, then far the most,
Do I regret what we have lost ;
Am grieved for that unhappy sin
Which robbed us of good Benjamin ;—
And of his stately Charge, which none
Could keep alive when He was gone !

POEMS OF THE IMAGINATION.

I.

THERE WAS A BOY.

THERE was a Boy ; ye knew him well, ye cliffs
 And islands of Winander !—many a time,
 At evening, when the earliest stars began
 To move along the edges of the hills,
 Rising or setting, would he stand alone,
 Beneath the trees, or by the glimmering lake ;
 And there, with fingers interwoven, both hands
 Pressed closely palm to palm and to his mouth
 Uplifted, he, as through an instrument,
 Blew mimic hootings to the silent owls,
 That they might answer him.—And they would shout
 Across the watery vale, and shout again,
 Responsive to his call,—with quivering peals,
 And long halloos, and screams, and echoes loud
 Redoubled and redoubled ; concourse wild
 Of jocund din ! And, when there came a pause
 Of silence such as baffled his best skill :
 Then, sometimes, in that silence, while he hung
 Listening, a gentle shock of mild surprise
 Has carried far into his heart the voice
 Of mountain-torrents ; or the visible scene
 Would enter unawares into his mind
 With all its solemn imagery, its rocks,
 Its woods, and that uncertain heaven received
 Into the bosom of the steady lake.

This boy was taken from his mates, and died
 In childhood, ere he was full twelve years old.
 Pre-eminent in beauty is the vale
 Where he was born and bred : the church-yard hangs
 Upon a slope above the village-school ;
 And, through that church-yard when my way has led
 On summer-evenings, I believe, that there
 A long half-hour together I have stood
 Mute—looking at the grave in which he lies !

1799.

II.

TO THE CUCKOO.

O BLITHE New-comer ! I have heard,
 I hear thee and rejoice.
 O Cuckoo ! shall I call thee Bird,
 Or but a wandering Voice ?

While I am lying on the grass
 Thy twofold shout I hear,
 From hill to hill it seems to pass,
 At once far off, and near.

Though babbling only to the Vale,
 Of sunshine and of flowers,
 Thou bringest unto me a tale
 Of visionary hours.

Thrice welcome, darling of the Spring !
 Even yet thou art to me
 No bird, but an invisible thing,
 A voice, a mystery ;

The same whom in my school-boy days
 I listened to ; that Cry
 Which made me look a thousand ways
 In bush, and tree, and sky.

To seek thee did I often rove
 Through woods and on the green ;
 And thou wert still a hope, a love ;
 Still longed for, never seen.

And I can listen to thee yet ;
 Can lie upon the plain
 And listen, till I do beget
 That golden time again.

O blessed Bird ! the earth we pace
 Again appears to be
 An unsubstantial, faery place ;
 That is fit home for Thee !

1804.

III.

A NIGHT-PIECE.

—— THE sky is overcast
 With a continuous cloud of texture close,
 Heavy and wan, all whitened by the Moon,
 Which through that veil is indistinctly seen,
 A dull, contracted circle, yielding light
 So feebly spread, that not a shadow falls,

Chequering the ground—from rock, plant, tree, or tower.

At length a pleasant instantaneous gleam
Startles the pensive traveller while he treads
His lonesome path, with unobserving eye
Bent earthwards ; he looks up—the clouds are split
Asunder,—and above his head he sees
The clear Moon, and the glory of the heavens.
There, in a black-blue vault she sails along,
Followed by multitudes of stars, that, small
And sharp, and bright, along the dark abyss
Drive as she drives : how fast they wheel away,
Yet vanish not !—the wind is in the tree,
But they are silent ;—still they roll along
Immeasurably distant ; and the vault,
Built round by those white clouds, enormous clouds,
Still deepens its unfathomable depth.
At length the Vision closes ; and the mind,
Not undisturbed by the delight it feels,
Which slowly settles into peaceful calm,
Is left to muse upon the solemn scene.

1798.

IV.

AIREY-FORCE VALLEY.

— Nor a breath of air
Ruffles the bosom of this leafy glen.
From the brook's margin, wide around, the trees
Are steadfast as the rocks ; the brook itself,
Old as the hills that feed it from afar,
Doth rather deepen than disturb the calm
Where all things else are still and motionless.
And yet, even now, a little breeze, perchance
Escaped from boisterous winds that rage without,
Has entered, by the sturdy oaks unfelt,
But to its gentle touch how sensitive
Is the light ash ! that, pendent from the brow
Of yon dim cave, in seeming silence makes
A soft eye-music of slow-waving boughs,
Powerful almost as vocal harmony
To stay the wanderer's steps and soothe his thoughts.

V.

YEW-TREES.

THERE is a Yew-tree, pride of Lorton Vale,
Which to this day stands single, in the midst
Of its own darkness, as it stood of yore :
Not loth to furnish weapons for the bands
Of Umfraville or Percy ere they marched

To Scotland's heaths ; or those that crossed the sea
And drew their sounding bows at Azincour,
Perhaps at earlier Crecy, or Poitiers.
Of vast circumference and gloom profound
This solitary Tree ! a living thing
Produced too slowly ever to decay ;
Of form and aspect too magnificent
To be destroyed. But worthier still of note
Are those fraternal Four of Borrowdale,
Joined in one solemn and capacious grove ;
Huge trunks ! and each particular trunk a growth
Of intertwined fibres serpentine
Up-coiling, and inveterately convolved ;
Nor uninformed with Phantasy, and looks
That threaten the profane ;—a pillared shade,
Upon whose grassless floor of red-brown hue,
By sheddings from the pining umbrage tinged
Perennially—beneath whose sable roof
Of boughs, as if for festal purpose, decked
With unrejoicing berries—ghostly Shapes
May meet at noontide ; Fear and trembling Hope,
Silence and Foresight ; Death the Skeleton
And Time the Shadow ;—there to celebrate,
As in a natural temple scattered o'er
With altars undisturbed of mossy stone,
United worship ; or in mute repose
To lie, and listen to the mountain flood
Murmuring from Glaramara's inmost caves.

1803.

VI.

NUTTING.

— It seems a day
(I speak of one from many singled out)
One of those heavenly days that cannot die ;
When, in the eagerness of boyish hope,
I left our cottage-threshold, sallying forth
With a huge wallet o'er my shoulders slung,
A nutting-crook in hand ; and turned my steps
Tow'rd some far-distant wood, a Figure quaint,
Tricked out in proud disguise of cast-off weeds
Which for that service had been husbanded,
By exhortation of my frugal Dame—
Motley accoutrement, of power to smile
At thorns, and brakes, and brambles,—and, in truth,
More ragged than need was ! O'er pathless rocks,
Through beds of matted fern, and tangled thickets,
Forcing my way, I came to one dear nook
Unvisited, where not a broken bough
Drooped with its withered leaves, ungracious sign
Of devastation ; but the hazels rose
Tall and erect, with tempting clusters hung,

A virgin scene !—A little while I stood,
 Breathing with such suppression of the heart
 As joy delights in ; and, with wise restraint
 Voluptuous, fearless of a rival, eyed
 The banquet ;—or beneath the trees I sat
 Among the flowers, and with the flowers I played ;
 A temper known to those, who, after long
 And weary expectation, have been blest
 With sudden happiness beyond all hope.
 Perhaps it was a bower beneath whose leaves
 The violets of five seasons re-appear
 And fade, unseen by any human eye ;
 Where fairy water-breaks do murmur on
 For ever ; and I saw the sparkling foam,
 And—with my cheek on one of those green stones
 That, fleeced with moss, under the shady trees,
 Lay round me, scattered like a flock of sheep—
 I heard the murmur and the murmuring sound,
 In that sweet mood when pleasure loves to pay
 Tribute to ease ; and, of its joy secure,
 The heart luxuriates with indifferent things,
 Wasting its kindliness on stocks and stones,
 And on the vacant air. Then up I rose,
 And dragged to earth both branch and bough, with
 crash
 And merciless ravage : and the shady nook
 Of hazels, and the green and mossy bower,
 Deformed and sullied, patiently gave up
 Their quiet being : and, unless I now
 Confound my present feelings with the past ;
 Ere from the mutilated bower I turned
 Exulting, rich beyond the wealth of kings,
 I felt a sense of pain when I beheld
 The silent trees, and saw the intruding sky.—
 Then, dearest Maiden, move along these shades
 In gentleness of heart ; with gentle hand
 Touch—for there is a spirit in the woods.

1799.

VII.

THE SIMPLON PASS.

———Brook and road
 Were fellow-travellers in this gloomy Pass,
 And with them did we journey several hours
 At a slow step. The immeasurable height
 Of woods decaying, never to be decayed,
 The stationary blasts of waterfalls,
 And in the narrow rent, at every turn,
 Winds thwarting winds bewildered and forlorn,
 The torrents shooting from the clear blue sky,
 The rocks that muttered close upon our ears,
 Black drizzling crags that spake by the wayside

As if a voice were in them, the sick sight
 And giddy prospect of the raving stream,
 The unfettered clouds and region of the heavens,
 Tumult and peace, the darkness and the light—
 Were all like workings of one mind, the features
 Of the same face, blossoms upon one tree,
 Characters of the great Apocalypse,
 The types and symbols of Eternity,
 Of first, and last, and midst, and without end.

1799.

VIII.

SHE was a Phantom of delight
 When first she gleamed upon my sight ;
 A lovely Apparition, sent
 To be a moment's ornament ;
 Her eyes as stars of Twilight fair ;
 Like Twilight's, too, her dusky hair ;
 But all things else about her drawn
 From May-time and the cheerful Dawn ;
 A dancing Shape, an Image gay,
 To haunt, to startle, and way-lay.

I saw her upon nearer view,
 A Spirit, yet a Woman too !
 Her household motions light and free,
 And steps of virgin-liberty ;
 A countenance in which did meet
 Sweet records, promises as sweet ;
 A Creature not too bright or good
 For human nature's daily food ;
 For transient sorrows, simple wiles,
 Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles.

And now I see with eye serene
 The very pulse of the machine ;
 A Being breathing thoughtful breath,
 A Traveller between life and death ;
 The reason firm, the temperate will,
 Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill ;
 A perfect Woman, nobly planned,
 To warn, to comfort, and command ;
 And yet a Spirit still, and bright
 With something of angelic light.

1804.

IX.

O NIGHTINGALE ! thou surely art
 A creature of a ' fiery heart ' :—
 These notes of thine—they pierce and pierce ;
 Tumultuous harmony and fierce !
 Thou sing'st as if the God of wine
 Had helped thee to a Valentine ;

A song in mockery and despite
Of shades, and dews, and silent night ;
And steady bliss, and all the loves
Now sleeping in these peaceful groves.

I heard a Stock-dove sing or say
His homely tale, this very day ;
His voice was buried among trees,
Yet to be come-at by the breeze :
He did not cease ; but cooed—and cooed ;
And somewhat pensively he wooed :
He sang of love, with quiet blending,
Slow to begin, and never ending ;
Of serious faith, and inward glee ;
That was the song—the song for me !

1806.

X.

THREE years she grew in sun and shower,
Then Nature said, "A lovelier flower
On earth was never sown ;
This Child I to myself will take ;
She shall be mine, and I will make
A Lady of my own.

Myself will to my darling be
Both law and impulse : and with me
The Girl, in rock and plain,
In earth and heaven, in glade and bower,
Shall feel an overseeing power
To kindle or restrain.

She shall be sportive as the fawn
That wild with glee across the lawn
Or up the mountain springs ;
And her's shall be the breathing balm,
And her's the silence and the calm
Of mute insensate things.

The floating clouds their state shall lend
To her ; for her the willow bend ;
Nor shall she fail to see
Even in the motions of the Storm
Grace that shall mould the Maiden's form
By silent sympathy.

The stars of midnight shall be dear
To her ; and she shall lean her ear
In many a secret place
Where rivulets dance their wayward round,
And beauty born of murmuring sound
Shall pass into her face.

And vital feelings of delight
Shall rear her form to stately height,
Her virgin bosom swell ;
Such thoughts to Lucy I will give
While she and I together live
Here in this happy dell."

Thus Nature spake—The work was done—
How soon my Lucy's race was run !
She died, and left to me
This heath, this calm, and quiet scene ;
The memory of what has been,
And never more will be.

1799.

XI.

A SLUMBER did my spirit seal ;
I had no human fears :
She seemed a thing that could not feel
The touch of earthly years.

No motion has she now, no force ;
She neither hears nor sees ;
Rolled round in earth's diurnal course,
With rocks, and stones, and trees.

1799.

XII.

I WANDERED lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils ;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay :
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced ; but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee :
A poet could not but be gay,
In such a jocund company :
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought :

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,

They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude ;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

1804.

XIII.

THE REVERIE OF POOR SUSAN.

At the corner of Wood Street, when daylight
appears,
Hangs a Thrush that sings loud, it has sung for
three years :

Poor Susan has passed by the spot, and has heard
In the silence of morning the song of the Bird.

'Tis a note of enchantment ; what ails her ? She sees
A mountain ascending, a vision of trees ;
Bright volumes of vapour through Lothbury glide,
And a river flows on through the vale of Cheapside.

Green pastures she views in the midst of the dale,
Down which she so often has tripped with her pail ;
And a single small cottage, a nest like a dove's,
The one only dwelling on earth that she loves.

She looks, and her heart is in heaven : but they fade,
The mist and the river, the hill and the shade :
The stream will not flow, and the hill will not rise,
And the colours have all passed away from her eyes !

1797.

XIV.

POWER OF MUSIC.

AN Orpheus ! an Orpheus ! yes, Faith may grow bold,
And take to herself all the wonders of old ;—
Near the stately Pantheon you'll meet with the same
In the street that from Oxford hath borrowed its
name.

His station is there ; and he works on the crowd,
He sways them with harmony merry and loud ;
He fills with his power all their hearts to the brim—
Was aught ever heard like his fiddle and him ?

What an eager assembly ! what an empire is this !
The weary have life, and the hungry have bliss ;
The mourner is cheered, and the anxious have rest ;
And the guilt-burthened soul is no longer oppress.

As the Moon brightens round her the clouds of the
night,
So He, where he stands, is a centre of light ;
It gleams on the face, there, of dusky-browed Jack,
And the pale-visaged Baker's, with basket on back.

That errand-bound 'Prentice was passing in haste—
What matter ! he's caught—and his time runs to
waste ;

The Newsman is stopped, though he stops on the
fret ;

And the half-breathless Lamplighter—he's in the
net !

The Porter sits down on the weight which he bore ;
The Lass with her barrow wheels hither her store ;—
If a thief could be here he might pilfer at ease ;
She sees the Musician, 'tis all that she sees !

He stands, backed by the wall ;—he abates not his
din ;

His hat gives him vigour, with boons dropping in,
From the old and the young, from the poorest ;
and there !

The one-pennied Boy has his penny to spare.

O blest are the hearers, and proud be the hand
Of the pleasure it spreads through so thankful a
band ;

I am glad for him, blind as he is !—all the while
If they speak 'tis to praise, and they praise with a
smile.

That tall Man, a giant in bulk and in height,
Not an inch of his body is free from delight ;
Can he keep himself still, if he would ? oh, not he !
The music stirs in him like wind through a tree.

Mark that Cripple who leans on his crutch ; like a
tower

That long has leaned forward, leans hour after
hour !—

That Mother, whose spirit in fetters is bound,
While she dandles the Babe in her arms to the sound.

Now, coaches and chariots ! roar on like a stream ;
Here are twenty souls happy as souls in a dream :
They are deaf to your murmurs—they care not for
you,
Nor what ye are flying, nor what ye pursue !

1806.

xv.

STAR-GAZERS.

WHAT crowd is this? what have we here! we must
not pass it by;

A Telescope upon its frame, and pointed to the sky:
Long is it as a barber's pole, or mast of little boat,
Some little pleasure-skiff, that doth on Thames's
waters float.

The Show-man chooses well his place, 'tis Leicester's
busy Square;
And is as happy in his night, for the heavens are
blue and fair;
Calm, though impatient, is the crowd; each stands
ready with the fee,
And envies him that's looking;—what an insight
must it be!

Yet, Showman, where can lie the cause? Shall thy
Implement have blame,

A boaster, that when he is tried, fails, and is put
to shame?

Or is it good as others are, and be their eyes in
fault?

Their eyes, or minds? or, finally, is yon resplendent
vault?

Is nothing of that radiant pomp so good as we have
here?

Or gives a thing but small delight that never can
be dear?

The silver moon with all her vales, and hills of
mightiest fame,

Doth she betray us when they're seen? or are they
but a name?

Or is it rather that Conceit rapacious is and strong,
And bounty never yields so much but it seems to
do her wrong?

Or is it, that when human Souls a journey long
have had

And are returned into themselves, they cannot but
be sad?

Or must we be constrained to think that these
Spectators rude,

Poor in estate, of manners base, men of the multi-
tude,

Have souls which never yet have risen, and there-
fore prostrate lie?

No, no, this cannot be;—men thirst for power and
majesty!

Does, then, a deep and earnest thought the blissful
mind employ

Of him who gazes, or has gazed? a grave and steady
joy,

That doth reject all show of pride, admits no out-
ward sign,

Because not of this noisy world, but silent and
divine!

Whatever be the cause, 'tis sure that they who
pry and pore

Seem to meet with little gain, seem less happy than
before:

One after One they take their turn, nor have I one
espied

That doth not slackly go away, as if dissatisfied.

1806.

xvi.

WRITTEN IN MARCH,

WHILE RESTING ON THE BRIDGE AT THE FOOT OF
BROTHER'S WATER.

THE Cock is crowing,

The stream is flowing,

The small birds twitter,

The lake doth glitter,

The green field sleeps in the sun;

The oldest and youngest

Are at work with the strongest;

The cattle are grazing,

Their heads never raising;

There are forty feeding like one!

Like an army defeated

The snow hath retreated,

And now doth bare ill

On the top of the bare hill;

The Ploughboy is whooping—anon—anon:

There's joy in the mountains;

There's life in the fountains;

Small clouds are sailing,

Blue sky prevailing;

The rain is over and gone!

1801.

XVII.

LYRE! though such power do in thy magic live
 As might from India's farthest plain
 Recal the not unwilling Maid,
 Assist me to detain
 The lovely Fugitive:
 Check with thy notes the impulse which, betrayed
 By her sweet farewell looks, I longed to aid.
 Here let me gaze enrapt upon that eye,
 The impregnable and awe-inspiring fort
 Of contemplation, the calm port
 By reason fenced from winds that sigh
 Among the restless sails of vanity.
 But if no wish be hers that we should part,
 A humbler bliss would satisfy my heart.
 Where all things are so fair,
 Enough by her dear side to breathe the air
 Of this Elysian weather;
 And, on or in, or near, the brook, espy
 Shade upon the sunshine lying
 Faint and somewhat pensively;
 And downward Image gaily living
 With its upright living tree
 Mid silver clouds, and openings of blue sky
 As soft almost and deep as her cerulean eye.

Nor less the joy with many a glance
 Cast up the Stream or down at her beseeching,
 To mark its eddying foam-balls prettily distrest
 By ever-changing shape and want of rest;
 Or watch, with mutual teaching,
 The current as it plays
 In flashing leaps and stealthy creeps
 Adown a rocky maze;
 Or note (translucent summer's happiest chance!)
 In the slope-channel floored with pebbles bright,
 Stones of all hues, gem emulous of gem,
 So vivid that they take from keenest sight
 The liquid veil that seeks not to hide them.

XVIII.

BEGGARS.

SHE had a tall man's height or more;
 Her face from summer's noontide heat
 No bonnet shaded, but she wore
 A mantle, to her very feet
 Descending with a graceful flow,
 And on her head a cap as white as new-fallen snow.

Her skin was of Egyptian brown:
 Haughty, as if her eye had seen
 Its own light to a distance thrown,
 She towered, fit person for a Queen
 To lead those ancient Amazonian files;
 Or ruling Bandit's wife among the Grecian isles.

Advancing, forth she stretched her hand
 And begged an alms with doleful plea
 That ceased not; on our English land
 Such woes, I knew, could never be;
 And yet a boon I gave her, for the creature
 Was beautiful to see—a weed of glorious feature.

I left her, and pursued my way;
 And soon before me did espy
 A pair of little Boys at play,
 Chasing a crimson butterfly;
 The taller followed with his hat in hand,
 Wreathed round with yellow flowers the gayest of
 the land.

The other wore a rimless crown
 With leaves of laurel stuck about;
 And, while both followed up and down,
 Each whooping with a merry shout,
 In their fraternal features I could trace
 Unquestionable lines of that wild Suppliant's face.

Yet *they*, so blithe of heart, seemed fit
 For finest tasks of earth or air:
 Wings let them have, and they might flit
 Precursors to Aurora's car,
 Scattering fresh flowers; though happier far, I
 ween,
 To hunt their fluttering game o'er rock and level
 green.

They dart across my path—but lo,
 Each ready with a plaintive whine!
 Said I, "not half an hour ago
 Your Mother has had alms of mine."
 "That cannot be," one answered—"she is dead:"—
 I looked reproof—they saw—but neither hung his
 head.

"She has been dead, Sir, many a day."—
 "Hush, boys! you're telling me a lie;
 It was your Mother, as I say!"
 And, in the twinkling of an eye,
 "Come! come!" cried one, and without more ado,
 Off to some other play the joyous Vagrants flew!

1802.

XIX.

SEQUEL TO THE FOREGOING,

COMPOSED MANY YEARS AFTER.

WHERE are they now, those wanton Boys?
 For whose free range the dædal earth
 Was filled with animated toys,
 And implements of frolic mirth;
 With tools for ready wit to guide;
 And ornaments of seemlier pride,
 More fresh, more bright, than princes wear;
 For what one moment flung aside,
 Another could repair;
 What good or evil have they seen
 Since I their pastime witnessed here,
 Their daring wiles, their sportive cheer?
 I ask—but all is dark between!

They met me in a genial hour,
 When universal nature breathed
 As with the breath of one sweet flower,—
 A time to overrule the power
 Of discontent, and check the birth
 Of thoughts with better thoughts at strife,
 The most familiar bane of life
 Since parting Innocence bequeathed
 Mortality to Earth!
 Soft clouds, the whitest of the year,
 Sailed through the sky—the brooks ran clear;
 The lambs from rock to rock were bounding;
 With songs the budded groves resounding;
 And to my heart are still endeared
 The thoughts with which it then was cheered;
 The faith which saw that gladsome pair
 Walk through the fire with unsinged hair.
 Or, if such faith must needs deceive—
 Then, Spirits of beauty and of grace,
 Associates in that eager chase;
 Ye, who within the blameless mind
 Your favourite seat of empire find—
 Kind Spirits! may we not believe
 That they, so happy and so fair
 Through your sweet influence, and the care
 Of pitying Heaven, at least were free
 From touch of *deadly* injury?
 Destined, whate'er their earthly doom,
 For mercy and immortal bloom!

1817.

XX.

GIPSIES.

YET are they here the same unbroken knot
 Of human Beings, in the self-same spot!

Men, women, children, yea the frame
 Of the whole spectacle the same!
 Only their fire seems bolder, yielding light,
 Now deep and red, the colouring of night;
 That on their Gipsy-faces falls,
 Their bed of straw and blanket-walls.

—Twelve hours, twelve bounteous hours are gone,
 while I

Have been a traveller under open sky,
 Much witnessing of change and cheer,
 Yet as I left I find them here!

The weary Sun betook himself to rest;—
 Then issued Vesper from the fulgent west,
 Outshining like a visible God

The glorious path in which he trod.

And now, ascending, after one dark hour

And one night's diminution of her power,

Behold the mighty Moon! this way

She looks as if at them—but they

Regard not her:—oh better wrong and strife
 (By nature transient) than this torpid life;

Life which the very stars reprove

As on their silent tasks they move!

Yet, witness all that stirs in heaven or earth!

In scorn I speak not;—they are what their birth

And breeding suffer them to be;

Wild outcasts of society!

1807.

XXI.

RUTH.

WHEN Ruth was left half desolate,
 Her Father took another Mate;
 And Ruth, not seven years old,
 A slighted child, at her own will
 Went wandering over dale and hill,
 In thoughtless freedom, bold.

And she had made a pipe of straw,
 And music from that pipe could draw
 Like sounds of winds and floods;
 Had built a bower upon the green,
 As if she from her birth had been
 An infant of the woods.

Beneath her father's roof, alone
 She seemed to live; her thoughts her own;
 Herself her own delight;
 Pleased with herself, nor sad, nor gay;
 And, passing thus the live-long day,
 She grew to woman's height.

There came a Youth from Georgia's shore—
 A military casque he wore,
 With splendid feathers drest;
 He brought them from the Cherokees;
 The feathers nodded in the breeze,
 And made a gallant crest.

From Indian blood you deem him sprung:
 But no! he spake the English tongue,
 And bore a soldier's name;
 And, when America was free
 From battle and from jeopardy,
 He 'cross the ocean came.

With hues of genius on his cheek
 In finest tones the Youth could speak:
 —While he was yet a boy,
 The moon, the glory of the sun,
 And streams that murmur as they run,
 Had been his dearest joy.

He was a lovely Youth! I guess
 The panther in the wilderness
 Was not so fair as he;
 And, when he chose to sport and play,
 No dolphin ever was so gay
 Upon the tropic sea.

Among the Indians he had fought,
 And with him many tales he brought
 Of pleasure and of fear;
 Such tales as told to any maid
 By such a Youth, in the green shade,
 Were perilous to hear.

He told of girls—a happy rout!
 Who quit their fold with dance and shout,
 Their pleasant Indian town,
 To gather strawberries all day long;
 Returning with a choral song
 When daylight is gone down.

He spake of plants that hourly change
 Their blossoms, through a boundless range
 Of intermingling hues;
 With budding, fading, faded flowers
 They stand the wonder of the bowers
 From morn to evening dews.

He told of the magnolia, spread
 High as a cloud, high over head!
 The cypress and her spire;
 —Of flowers that with one scarlet gleam
 Cover a hundred leagues, and seem
 To set the hills on fire.

The Youth of green savannahs spake,
 And many an endless, endless lake,
 With all its fairy crowds
 Of islands, that together lie
 As quietly as spots of sky
 Among the evening clouds.

"How pleasant," then he said, "it were
 A fisher or a hunter there,
 In sunshine or in shade
 To wander with an easy mind;
 And build a household fire, and find
 A home in every glade!

What days and what bright years! Ah me!
 Our life were life indeed, with thee
 So passed in quiet bliss,
 And all the while," said he, "to know
 That we were in a world of woe,
 On such an earth as this!"

And then he sometimes interwove
 Fond thoughts about a father's love:
 "For there," said he, "are spun
 Around the heart such tender ties,
 That our own children to our eyes
 Are dearer than the sun.

Sweet Ruth! and could you go with me
 My helpmate in the woods to be,
 Our shed at night to rear;
 Or run, my own adopted bride,
 A sylvan huntress at my side,
 And drive the flying deer!

Beloved Ruth!"—No more he said.
 The wakeful Ruth at midnight shed
 A solitary tear:
 She thought again—and did agree
 With him to sail across the sea,
 And drive the flying deer.

"And now, as fitting is and right,
 We in the church our faith will plight,
 A husband and a wife."
 Even so they did; and I may say
 That to sweet Ruth that happy day
 Was more than human life.

Through dream and vision did she sink,
 Delighted all the while to think
 That on those lonesome floods,
 And green savannahs, she should share
 His board with lawful joy, and bear
 His name in the wild woods.

But, as you have before been told,
 This Stripling, sportive, gay, and bold,
 And, with his dancing crest,
 So beautiful, through savage lands
 Had roamed about, with vagrant bands
 Of Indians in the West.

The wind, the tempest roaring high,
 The tumult of a tropic sky,
 Might well be dangerous food
 For him, a Youth to whom was given
 So much of earth—so much of heaven,
 And such impetuous blood.

Whatever in those climes he found
 Irregular in sight or sound
 Did to his mind impart
 A kindred impulse, seemed allied
 To his own powers, and justified
 The workings of his heart.

Nor less, to feed voluptuous thought,
 The beauteous forms of nature wrought,
 Fair trees and gorgeous flowers ;
 The breezes their own languor lent ;
 The stars had feelings, which they sent
 Into those favored bowers.

Yet, in his worst pursuits, I ween
 That sometimes there did intervene
 Pure hopes of high intent :
 For passions linked to forms so fair
 And stately, needs must have their share
 Of noble sentiment.

But ill he lived, much evil saw,
 With men to whom no better law
 Nor better life was known ;
 Deliberately, and undeceived,
 Those wild men's vices he received,
 And gave them back his own.

His genius and his moral frame
 Were thus impaired, and he became
 The slave of low desires :
 A Man who without self-control
 Would seek what the degraded soul
 Unworthily admires.

And yet he with no feigned delight
 Had wooed the Maiden, day and night
 Had loved her, night and morn :
 What could he less than love a Maid
 Whose heart with so much nature played ?
 So kind and so forlorn !

Sometimes, most earnestly, he said,
 "O Ruth ! I have been worse than dead ;
 False thoughts, thoughts bold and vain,
 Encompassed me on every side
 When I, in confidence and pride,
 Had crossed the Atlantic main.

Before me shone a glorious world—
 Fresh as a banner bright, unfurled
 To music suddenly :
 I looked upon those hills and plains,
 And seemed as if let loose from chains,
 To live at liberty.

No more of this ; for now, by thee
 Dear Ruth ! more happily set free
 With nobler zeal I burn ;
 My soul from darkness is released,
 Like the whole sky when to the east
 The morning doth return."

Full soon that better mind was gone ;
 No hope, no wish remained, not one,—
 They stirred him now no more ;
 New objects did new pleasure give,
 And once again he wished to live
 As lawless as before.

Meanwhile, as thus with him it fared,
 They for the voyage were prepared,
 And went to the sea-shore,
 But, when they thither came, the Youth
 Deserted his poor Bride, and Ruth
 Could never find him more.

God help thee, Ruth !—Such pains she had,
 That she in half a year was mad,
 And in a prison housed ;
 And there, with many a doleful song
 Made of wild words, her cup of wrong
 She fearfully caroused.

Yet sometimes milder hours she knew,
 Nor wanted sun, nor rain, nor dew,
 Nor pastimes of the May ;
 —They all were with her in her cell ;
 And a clear brook with cheerful knell
 Did o'er the pebbles play.

When Ruth three seasons thus had lain,
There came a respite to her pain;
She from her prison fled;
But of the Vagrant none took thought;
And where it liked her best she sought
Her shelter and her bread.

Among the fields she breathed again:
The master-current of her brain
Ran permanent and free;
And, coming to the Banks of Tone,
There did she rest; and dwell alone
Under the greenwood tree.

The engines of her pain, the tools
That shaped her sorrow, rocks and pools,
And airs that gently stir
The vernal leaves—she loved them still;
Nor ever taxed them with the ill
Which had been done to her.

A Barn her *winter* bed supplies;
But, till the warmth of summer skies
And summer days is gone,
(And all do in this tale agree)
She sleeps beneath the greenwood tree,
And other home hath none.

An innocent life, yet far astray!
And Ruth will, long before her day,
Be broken down and old:
Sore aches she needs must have! but less
Of mind, than body's wretchedness,
From damp, and rain, and cold.

If she is prest by want of food,
She from her dwelling in the wood
Repairs to a road-side;
And there she begs at one steep place
Where up and down with easy pace
The horsemen-travellers ride.

That oaten pipe of hers is mute,
Or thrown away; but with a flute
Her loneliness she cheers:
This flute, made of a hemlock stalk,
At evening in his homeward walk
The Quantock woodman hears.

I, too, have passed her on the hills
Setting her little water-mills
By spouts and fountains wild—
Such small machinery as she turned
Ere she had wept, ere she had mourned,
A young and happy Child!

Farewell! and when thy days are told,
Ill-fated Ruth, in hallowed mould
Thy corpse shall buried be,
For thee a funeral bell shall ring,
And all the congregation sing
A Christian psalm for thee.

1799.

XXII.

RESOLUTION AND INDEPENDENCE.

I.

THERE was a roaring in the wind all night;
The rain came heavily and fell in floods;
But now the sun is rising calm and bright;
The birds are singing in the distant woods;
Over his own sweet voice the Stock-dove broods;
The Jay makes answer as the Magpie chatters;
And all the air is filled with pleasant noise of waters.

II.

All things that love the sun are out of doors;
The sky rejoices in the morning's birth;
The grass is bright with rain-drops;—on the moors
The hare is running races in her mirth;
And with her feet she from the plashy earth
Raises a mist; that, glittering in the sun,
Runs with her all the way, wherever she doth run.

III.

I was a Traveller then upon the moor,
I saw the hare that raced about with joy;
I heard the woods and distant waters roar;
Or heard them not, as happy as a boy:
The pleasant season did my heart employ:
My old remembrances went from me wholly;
And all the ways of men, so vain and melancholy.

IV.

But, as it sometimes chanceth, from the might
Of joy in minds that can no further go,
As high as we have mounted in delight
In our dejection do we sink as low;
To me that morning did it happen so;
And fears and fancies thick upon me came;
Dim sadness—and blind thoughts, I knew not, nor
could name.

V.

I heard the sky-lark warbling in the sky;
And I bethought me of the playful hare:
Even such a happy Child of earth am I;
Even as these blissful creatures do I fare;
Far from the world I walk, and from all care;
But there may come another day to me—
Solitude, pain of heart, distress, and poverty.

VI.

My whole life I have lived in pleasant thought,
As if life's business were a summer mood ;
As if all needful things would come unsought
To genial faith, still rich in genial good ;
But how can He expect that others should
Build for him, sow for him, and at his call
Love him, who for himself will take no heed at all ?

VII.

I thought of Chatterton, the marvellous Boy,
The sleepless Soul that perished in his pride ;
Of Him who walked in glory and in joy
Following his plough, along the mountain-side :
By our own spirits are we deified :
We Poets in our youth begin in gladness ;
But thereof come in the end despondency and
madness.

VIII.

Now, whether it were by peculiar grace,
A leading from above, a something given,
Yet it befel, that, in this lonely place,
When I with these untoward thoughts had striven,
Beside a pool bare to the eye of heaven
I saw a Man before me unawares :
The oldest man he seemed that ever wore grey hairs.

IX.

As a huge stone is sometimes seen to lie
Couched on the bald top of an eminence ;
Wonder to all who do the same espy,
By what means it could thither come, and whence ;
So that it seems a thing endowed with sense :
Like a sea-beast crawled forth, that on a shelf
Of rock or sand reposeth, there to sun itself ;

X.

Such seemed this Man, not all alive nor dead,
Nor all asleep—in his extreme old age :
His body was bent double, feet and head
Coming together in life's pilgrimage ;
As if some dire constraint of pain, or rage
Of sickness felt by him in times long past,
A more than human weight upon his frame had cast.

XI.

Himself he propped, limbs, body, and pale face,
Upon a long grey staff of shaven wood :
And, still as I drew near with gentle pace,
Upon the margin of that morish flood
Motionless as a cloud the old Man stood,
That heareth not the loud winds when they call ;
And moveth all together, if it move at all.

XII.

At length, himself unsettling, he the pond
Stirred with his staff, and fixedly did look
Upon the muddy water, which he conned,
As if he had been reading in a book :
And now a stranger's privilege I took ;
And, drawing to his side, to him did say,
" This morning gives us promise of a glorious day."

XIII.

A gentle answer did the old Man make,
In courteous speech which forth he slowly drew :
And him with further words I thus bespake,
" What occupation do you there pursue ?
This is a lonesome place for one like you."
Ere he replied, a flash of mild surprise
Broke from the sable orbs of his yet-vivid eyes.

XIV.

His words came feebly, from a feeble chest,
But each in solemn order followed each,
With something of a lofty utterance drest—
Choice word and measured phrase, above the reach
Of ordinary men ; a stately speech ;
Such as grave Livers do in Scotland use,
Religious men, who give to God and man their dues.

XV.

He told, that to these waters he had come
To gather leeches, being old and poor :
Employment hazardous and wearisome !
And he had many hardships to endure :
From pond to pond he roamed, from moor to moor ;
Housing, with God's good help, by choice or chance ;
And in this way he gained an honest maintenance.

XVI.

The old Man still stood talking by my side ;
But now his voice to me was like a stream
Scarcely heard ; nor word from word could I divide ;
And the whole body of the Man did seem
Like one whom I had met with in a dream ;
Or like a man from some far region sent,
To give me human strength, by apt admonishment.

XVII.

My former thoughts returned : the fear that kills ;
And hope that is unwilling to be fed ;
Cold, pain, and labour, and all fleshly ills ;
And mighty Poets in their misery dead.
—Perplexed, and longing to be comforted,
My question eagerly did I renew,
" How is it that you live, and what is it you do ?"

XVIII.

He with a smile did then his words repeat ;
 And said, that, gathering leeches, far and wide
 He travelled ; stirring thus about his feet
 The waters of the pools where they abide.
 " Once I could meet with them on every side ;
 But they have dwindled long by slow decay ;
 Yet still I persevere, and find them where I may."

XIX.

While he was talking thus, the lonely place,
 The old Man's shape, and speech—all troubled me :
 In my mind's eye I seemed to see him pace
 About the weary moors continually,
 Wandering about alone and silently.
 While I these thoughts within myself pursued,
 He, having made a pause, the same discourse
 renewed.

XX.

And soon with this he other matter blended,
 Cheerfully uttered, with demeanour kind,
 But stately in the main ; and when he ended,
 I could have laughed myself to scorn to find
 In that decrepit Man so firm a mind.
 " God," said I, " be my help and stay secure ;
 I'll think of the Leech-gatherer on the lonely moor !"

1807.

XXIII.

THE THORN.

I.

" THERE is a Thorn—it looks so old,
 In truth, you'd find it hard to say
 How it could ever have been young,
 It looks so old and grey.
 Not higher than a two years' child
 It stands erect, this aged Thorn ;
 No leaves it has, no prickly points ;
 It is a mass of knotted joints,
 A wretched thing forlorn.
 It stands erect, and like a stone
 With lichens is it overgrown.

II.

Like rock or stone, it is o'ergrown,
 With lichens to the very top,
 And hung with heavy tufts of moss,
 A melancholy crop :
 Up from the earth these mosses creep,

And this poor Thorn they clasp it round
 So close, you 'd say that they are bent
 With plain and manifest intent
 To drag it to the ground ;
 And all have joined in one endeavour
 To bury this poor Thorn for ever.

III.

High on a mountain's highest ridge,
 Where oft the stormy winter gale
 Cuts like a scythe, while through the clouds
 It sweeps from vale to vale ;
 Not five yards from the mountain path,
 This Thorn you on your left espy ;
 And to the left, three yards beyond,
 You see a little muddy pond
 Of water—never dry
 Though but of compass small, and bare
 To thirsty suns and parching air.

IV.

And, close beside this aged Thorn,
 There is a fresh and lovely sight,
 A beauteous heap, a hill of moss,
 Just half a foot in height.
 All lovely colours there you see,
 All colours that were ever seen ;
 And mossy network too is there,
 As if by hand of lady fair
 The work had woven been ;
 And cups, the darlings of the eye,
 So deep is their vermilion dye.

V.

Ah me ! what lovely tints are there
 Of olive green and scarlet bright,
 In spikes, in branches, and in stars,
 Green, red, and pearly white !
 This heap of earth o'ergrown with moss,
 Which close beside the Thorn you see,
 So fresh in all its beauteous dyes,
 Is like an infant's grave in size,
 As like as like can be :
 But never, never any where,
 An infant's grave was half so fair.

VI.

Now would you see this aged Thorn,
 This pond, and beauteous hill of moss,
 You must take care and choose your time
 The mountain when to cross.
 For oft there sits between the heap
 So like an infant's grave in size,
 And that same pond of which I spoke,
 A Woman in a scarlet cloak,

And to herself she cries,
 'Oh misery ! oh misery !
 Oh woe is me ! oh misery !'

VII.

At all times of the day and night
 This wretched Woman thither goes ;
 And she is known to every star,
 And every wind that blows ;
 And there, beside the Thorn, she sits
 When the blue daylight 's in the skies,
 And when the whirlwind 's on the hill,
 Or frosty air is keen and still,
 And to herself she cries,
 'Oh misery ! oh misery !
 Oh woe is me ! oh misery !'

VIII.

"Now wherefore, thus, by day and night,
 In rain, in tempest, and in snow,
 Thus to the dreary mountain-top
 Does this poor Woman go ?
 And why sits she beside the Thorn
 When the blue daylight 's in the sky
 Or when the whirlwind 's on the hill,
 Or frosty air is keen and still,
 And wherefore does she cry ?—
 O wherefore ? wherefore ? tell me why
 Does she repeat that doleful cry ?"

IX.

"I cannot tell ; I wish I could ;
 For the true reason no one knows :
 But would you gladly view the spot,
 The spot to which she goes ;
 The hillock like an infant's grave,
 The pond—and Thorn, so old and grey ;
 Pass by her door—'tis seldom shut—
 And, if you see her in her hut—
 Then to the spot away !
 I never heard of such as dare
 Approach the spot when she is there."

X.

"But wherefore to the mountain-top
 Can this unhappy Woman go,
 Whatever star is in the skies,
 Whatever wind may blow ?"
 "Full twenty years are past and gone
 Since she (her name is Martha Ray)
 Gave with a maiden's true good-will
 Her company to Stephen Hill ;
 And she was blithe and gay,
 While friends and kindred all approved
 Of him whom tenderly she loved.

XI.

And they had fixed the wedding day,
 The morning that must wed them both ;
 But Stephen to another Maid
 Had sworn another oath ;
 And, with this other Maid, to church
 Unthinking Stephen went—
 Poor Martha ! on that woeful day
 A pang of pitiless dismay
 Into her soul was sent ;
 A fire was kindled in her breast,
 Which might not burn itself to rest.

XII.

They say, full six months after this,
 While yet the summer leaves were green,
 She to the mountain-top would go,
 And there was often seen.
 What could she seek ?—or wish to hide ?
 Her state to any eye was plain ;
 She was with child, and she was mad ;
 Yet often was she sober sad
 From her exceeding pain.
 O guilty Father—would that death
 Had saved him from that breach of faith !

XIII.

Sad case for such a brain to hold
 Communion with a stirring child !
 Sad case, as you may think, for one
 Who had a brain so wild !
 Last Christmas-eve we talked of this,
 And grey-haired Wilfred of the glen
 Held that the unborn infant wrought
 About its mother's heart, and brought
 Her senses back again :
 And, when at last her time drew near,
 Her looks were calm, her senses clear.

XIV.

More know I not, I wish I did,
 And it should all be told to you ;
 For what became of this poor child
 No mortal ever knew ;
 Nay—if a child to her was born
 No earthly tongue could ever tell ;
 And if 'twas born alive or dead,
 Far less could this with proof be said,
 But some remember well,
 That Martha Ray about this time
 Would up the mountain often climb.

XV.

And all that winter, when at night
 The wind blew from the mountain-peak,
 'Twas worth your while, though in the dark,
 The churchyard path to seek :
 For many a time and oft were heard
 Cries coming from the mountain head :
 Some plainly living voices were ;
 And others, I 've heard many swear,
 Were voices of the dead :
 I cannot think, whate'er they say,
 They had to do with Martha Ray.

XVI.

But that she goes to this old Thorn,
 The Thorn which I described to you,
 And there sits in a scarlet cloak,
 I will be sworn is true.
 For one day with my telescope,
 To view the ocean wide and bright,
 When to this country first I came,
 Ere I had heard of Martha's name,
 I climbed the mountain's height :—
 A storm came on, and I could see
 No object higher than my knee.

XVII.

'Twas mist and rain, and storm and rain :
 No screen, no fence could I discover ;
 And then the wind ! in sooth, it was
 A wind full ten times over.
 I looked around, I thought I saw
 A jutting crag,—and off I ran,
 Head-foremost, through the driving rain,
 The shelter of the crag to gain ;
 And, as I am a man,
 Instead of jutting crag, I found
 A Woman seated on the ground.

XVIII.

I did not speak—I saw her face ;
 Her face !—it was enough for me ;
 I turned about and heard her cry,
 'Oh misery ! oh misery !'
 And there she sits, until the moon
 Through half the clear blue sky will go ;
 And, when the little breezes make
 The waters of the pond to shake,
 As all the country know,
 She shudders, and you hear her cry,
 'Oh misery ! oh misery !'

XIX.

"But what's the Thorn ? and what the pond ?
 And what the hill of moss to her ?
 And what the creeping breeze that comes
 The little pond to stir ?"
 "I cannot tell ; but some will say
 She hanged her baby on the tree ;
 Some say she drowned it in the pond,
 Which is a little step beyond :
 But all and each agree,
 The little Babe was buried there,
 Beneath that hill of moss so fair.

XX.

I 've heard, the moss is spotted red
 With drops of that poor infant's blood ;
 But kill a new-born infant thus,
 I do not think she could !
 Some say, if to the pond you go,
 And fix on it a steady view,
 The shadow of a babe you trace,
 A baby and a baby's face,
 And that it looks at you ;
 Whene'er you look on it, 'tis plain
 The baby looks at you again.

XXI.

And some had sworn an oath that she
 Should be to public justice brought ;
 And for the little infant's bones
 With spades they would have sought.
 But instantly the hill of moss
 Before their eyes began to stir !
 And, for full fifty yards around,
 The grass—it shook upon the ground !
 Yet all do still aver
 The little Babe lies buried there,
 Beneath that hill of moss so fair.

XXII.

I cannot tell how this may be
 But plain it is the Thorn is bound
 With heavy tufts of moss that strive
 To drag it to the ground ;
 And this I know, full many a time,
 When she was on the mountain high,
 By day, and in the silent night,
 When all the stars shone clear and bright,
 That I have heard her cry,
 'O misery ! oh misery !'
 Oh woe is me ! oh misery !"

XXIV.

HART-LEAP WELL.

Hart-Leap Well is a small spring of water, about five miles from Richmond in Yorkshire, and near the side of the road that leads from Richmond to Askrigg. Its name is derived from a remarkable Chase, the memory of which is preserved by the monuments spoken of in the second Part of the following Poem, which monuments do now exist as I have there described them.

THE Knight had ridden down from Wensley Moor
With the slow motion of a summer's cloud
And now, as he approached a vassal's door,
"Bring forth another horse!" he cried aloud.

"Another horse!"—That shout the vassal heard
And saddled his best Steed, a comely grey;
Sir Walter mounted him; he was the third
Which he had mounted on that glorious day.

Joy sparkled in the prancing courser's eyes;
The horse and horseman are a happy pair;
But, though Sir Walter like a falcon flies,
There is a doleful silence in the air.

A rout this morning left Sir Walter's Hall,
That as they galloped made the echoes roar;
But horse and man are vanished, one and all;
Such race, I think, was never seen before.

Sir Walter, restless as a veering wind,
Calls to the few tired dogs that yet remain:
Blanch, Swift, and Music, noblest of their kind,
Follow, and up the weary mountain strain.

The Knight hallooed, he cheered and chid them on
With suppliant gestures and upbraidings stern;
But breath and eyesight fail; and, one by one,
The dogs are stretched among the mountain fern.

Where is the throng, the tumult of the race?
The bugles that so joyfully were blown?
—This chase it looks not like an earthly chase;
Sir Walter and the Hart are left alone.

The poor Hart toils along the mountain-side;
I will not stop to tell how far he fled,
Nor will I mention by what death he died;
But now the Knight beholds him lying dead.

Dismounting, then, he leaned against a thorn;
He had no follower, dog, nor man, nor boy:
He neither cracked his whip, nor blew his horn,
But gazed upon the spoil with silent joy.

Close to the thorn on which Sir Walter leaned,
Stood his dumb partner in this glorious feat;
Weak as a lamb the hour that it is yeaned;
And white with foam as if with cleaving sleet.

Upon his side the Hart was lying stretched:
His nostril touched a spring beneath a hill,
And with the last deep groan his breath had fetched
The waters of the spring were trembling still.

And now, too happy for repose or rest,
(Never had living man such joyful lot!)
Sir Walter walked all round, north, south, and west,
And gazed and gazed upon that darling spot.

And climbing up the hill—(it was at least
Four roods of sheer ascent) Sir Walter found
Three several hoof-marks which the hunted Beast
Had left imprinted on the grassy ground.

Sir Walter wiped his face, and cried, "Till now
Such sight was never seen by human eyes:
Three leaps have borne him from this lofty brow,
Down to the very fountain where he lies.

I'll build a pleasure-house upon this spot,
And a small arbour, made for rural joy;
'Twill be the traveller's shed, the pilgrim's cot,
A place of love for damsels that are coy.

A cunning artist will I have to frame
A basin for that fountain in the dell!
And they who do make mention of the same,
From this day forth, shall call it HART-LEAP WELL.

And, gallant Stag! to make thy praises known,
Another monument shall here be raised;
Three several pillars, each a rough-hewn stone,
And planted where thy hoofs the turf have grazed.

And, in the summer-time when days are long,
I will come hither with my Paramour;
And with the dancers and the minstrel's song
We will make merry in that pleasant bower.

Till the foundations of the mountains fail
My mansion with its arbour shall endure;—
The joy of them who till the fields of Swale,
And them who dwell among the woods of Ure!"

Then home he went, and left the Hart, stone-dead,
With breathless nostrils stretched above the spring.
—Soon did the Knight perform what he had said;
And far and wide the fame thereof did ring.

Ere thrice the Moon into her port had steered,
A cup of stone received the living well ;
Three pillars of rude stone Sir Walter reared,
And built a house of pleasure in the dell.

And near the fountain, flowers of stature tall
With trailing plants and trees were intertwined,—
Which soon composed a little sylvan hall,
A leafy shelter from the sun and wind.

And thither, when the summer days were long
Sir Walter led his wondering Paramour ;
And with the dancers and the minstrel's song
Made merriment within that pleasant bower.

The Knight, Sir Walter, died in course of time,
And his bones lie in his paternal vale.—
But there is matter for a second rhyme,
And I to this would add another tale.

PART SECOND.

THE moving accident is not my trade ;
To freeze the blood I have no ready arts :
'Tis my delight, alone in summer shade,
To pipe a simple song for thinking hearts.

As I from Hawes to Richmond did repair,
It chanced that I saw standing in a dell
Three aspens at three corners of a square ;
And one, not four yards distant, near a well.

What this imported I could ill divine :
And, pulling now the rein my horse to stop,
I saw three pillars standing in a line,—
The last stone-pillar on a dark hill-top.

The trees were grey, with neither arms nor head ;
Half wasted the square mound of tawny green ;
So that you just might say, as then I said,
" Here in old time the hand of man hath been."

I looked upon the hill both far and near,
More doleful place did never eye survey ;
It seemed as if the spring-time came not here,
And Nature here were willing to decay.

I stood in various thoughts and fancies lost,
When one, who was in shepherd's garb attired,
Came up the hollow :—him did I accost,
And what this place might be I then inquired.

The Shepherd stopped, and that same story told
Which in my former rhyme I have rehearsed.
" A jolly place," said he, " in times of old !
But something ails it now : the spot is curst.

You see these lifeless stumps of aspen wood—
Some say that they are beeches, others elms—
These were the bower ; and here a mansion stood,
The finest palace of a hundred realms !

The arbour does its own condition tell ;
You see the stones, the fountain, and the stream ;
But as to the great Lodge ! you might as well
Hunt half a day for a forgotten dream.

There's neither dog nor heifer, horse nor sheep,
Will wet his lips within that cup of stone ;
And oftentimes, when all are fast asleep,
This water doth send forth a dolorous groan.

Some say that here a murder has been done,
And blood cries out for blood : but, for my part,
I've guessed, when I've been sitting in the sun,
That it was all for that unhappy Hart.

What thoughts must through the creature's brain
have past !
Even from the topmost stone, upon the steep,
Are but three bounds—and look, Sir, at this last—
O Master ! it has been a cruel leap.

For thirteen hours he ran a desperate race ;
And in my simple mind we cannot tell
What cause the Hart might have to love this place,
And come and make his death-bed near the well.

Here on the grass perhaps asleep he sank,
Lulled by the fountain in the summer-tide ;
This water was perhaps the first he drank
When he had wandered from his mother's side.

In April here beneath the flowering thorn
He heard the birds their morning carols sing ;
And he, perhaps, for aught we know, was born
Not half a furlong from that self-same spring.

Now, here is neither grass nor pleasant shade ;
The sun on drearier hollow never shone ;
So will it be, as I have often said,
Till trees, and stones, and fountain, all are gone."

" Grey-headed Shepherd, thou hast spoken well ;
Small difference lies between thy creed and mine :
This Beast not unobserved by Nature fell ;
His death was mourned by sympathy divine.

The Being, that is in the clouds and air,
That is in the green leaves among the groves,
Maintains a deep and reverential care
For the unoffending creatures whom he loves.

The pleasure-house is dust :—behind, before,
This is no common waste, no common gloom ;
But Nature, in due course of time, once more
Shall here put on her beauty and her bloom.

She leaves these objects to a slow decay,
That what we are, and have been, may be known ;
But at the coming of the milder day,
These monuments shall all be overgrown.

One lesson, Shepherd, let us two divide,
Taught both by what she shows, and what conceals ;
Never to blend our pleasure or our pride
With sorrow of the meanest thing that feels.”
1800.

XXV.

SONG AT THE FEAST OF BROUGHAM
CASTLE,

UPON THE RESTORATION OF LORD CLIFFORD, THE SHEP-
HERD, TO THE ESTATES AND HONOURS OF HIS
ANCESTORS.

High in the breathless Hall the Minstrel sate,
And Emont's murmur mingled with the Song.—
The words of ancient time I thus translate,
A festal strain that hath been silent long :—

“ From town to town, from tower to tower,
The red rose is a gladsome flower.
Her thirty years of winter past,
The red rose is revived at last ;
She lifts her head for endless spring,
For everlasting blossoming :
Both roses flourish, red and white :
In love and sisterly delight
The two that were at strife are blended,
And all old troubles now are ended.—
Joy ! joy to both ! but most to her
Who is the flower of Lancaster !
Behold her how She smiles to-day
On this great throng, this bright array !
Fair greeting doth she send to all
From every corner of the hall ;
But chiefly from above the board
Where sits in state our rightful Lord,
A Clifford to his own restored !

They came with banner, spear, and shield ;
And it was proved in Bosworth-field.
Not long the Avenger was withstood—
Earth helped him with the cry of blood :
St. George was for us, and the might
Of blessed Angels crowned the right.
Loud voice the Land has uttered forth,
We loudest in the faithful north :
Our fields rejoice, our mountains ring,
Our streams proclaim a welcoming ;
Our strong-abodes and castles see
The glory of their loyalty.

How glad is Skipton at this hour—
Though lonely, a deserted Tower ;
Knight, squire, and yeoman, page and groom :
We have them at the feast of Brough'm.
How glad Pendragon—though the sleep
Of years be on her !—She shall reap
A taste of this great pleasure, viewing
As in a dream her own renewing.
Rejoiced is Brough, right glad I deem
Beside her little humble stream ;
And she that keepeth watch and ward
Her statelier Eden's course to guard ;
They both are happy at this hour,
Though each is but a lonely Tower :—
But here is perfect joy and pride
For one fair House by Emont's side,
This day, distinguished without peer
To see her Master and to cheer—
Him, and his Lady-mother dear !

Oh ! it was a time forlorn
When the fatherless was born—
Give her wings that she may fly,
Or she sees her infant die !
Swords that are with slaughter wild
Hunt the Mother and the Child.
Who will take them from the light ?
—Yonder is a man in sight—
Yonder is a house—but where ?
No, they must not enter there.
To the caves, and to the brooks,
To the clouds of heaven she looks ;
She is speechless, but her eyes
Pray in ghostly agonies.
Blissful Mary, Mother mild,
Maid and Mother undefiled,
Save a Mother and her Child !

Now Who is he that bounds with joy
On Carrock's side, a Shepherd-boy ?
No thoughts hath he but thoughts that pass
Light as the wind along the grass.

Can this be He who hither came
In secret, like a smothered flame ?
O'er whom such thankful tears were shed
For shelter, and a poor man's bread !
God loves the Child ; and God hath willed
That those dear words should be fulfilled,
The Lady's words, when forced away
The last she to her Babe did say :
'My own, my own, thy Fellow-guest
I may not be ; but rest thee, rest,
For lowly shepherd's life is best !'

Alas ! when evil men are strong
No life is good, no pleasure long.
The Boy must part from Mosedale's groves,
And leave Blencathara's rugged coves,
And quit the flowers that summer brings
To Glenderamakin's lofty springs ;
Must vanish, and his careless cheer
Be turned to heaviness and fear.
—Give Sir Lancelot Threlkeld praise !
Hear it, good man, old in days !
Thou tree of covert and of rest
For this young Bird that is distrest ;
Among thy branches safe he lay,
And he was free to sport and play,
When falcons were abroad for prey.

A recreant harp, that sings of fear
And heaviness in Clifford's ear !
I said, when evil men are strong,
No life is good, no pleasure long,
A weak and cowardly untruth !
Our Clifford was a happy Youth,
And thankful through a weary time,
That brought him up to manhood's prime.
—Again he wanders forth at will,
And tends a flock from hill to hill :
His garb is humble ; ne'er was seen
Such garb with such a noble mien ;
Among the shepherd grooms no mate
Hath he, a Child of strength and state !
Yet lacks not friends for simple glee,
Nor yet for higher sympathy.
To his side the fallow-deer
Came, and rested without fear ;
The eagle, lord of land and sea,
Stooped down to pay him fealty ;
And both the undying fish that swim
Through Bowscale-tarn did wait on him ;
The pair were servants of his eye
In their immortality ;
And glancing, gleaming, dark or bright,
Moved to and fro, for his delight.

He knew the rocks which Angels haunt
Upon the mountains visitant ;
He hath kenned them taking wing :
And into caves where Faeries sing
He hath entered ; and been told
By Voices how men lived of old.
Among the heavens his eye can see
The face of thing that is to be ;
And, if that men report him right,
His tongue could whisper words of might.
—Now another day is come,
Fitter hope, and nobler doom ;
He hath thrown aside his crook,
And hath buried deep his book ;
Armour rusting in his halls
On the blood of Clifford calls ;—
'Quell the Scot,' exclaims the Lance—
Bear me to the heart of France,
Is the longing of the Shield—
Tell thy name, thou trembling Field ;
Field of death, where'er thou be,
Groan thou with our victory !
Happy day, and mighty hour,
When our Shepherd, in his power,
Mailed and horsed, with lance and sword,
To his ancestors restored
Like a re-appearing Star,
Like a glory from afar,
First shall head the flock of war !"

Alas ! the impassioned minstrel did not know
How, by Heaven's grace, this Clifford's heart was
framed :

How he, long forced in humble walks to go,
Was softened into feeling, soothed, and tamed.

Love had he found in huts where poor men lie ;
His daily teachers had been woods and rills,
The silence that is in the starry sky,
The sleep that is among the lonely hills.

In him the savage virtue of the Race,
Revenge, and all ferocious thoughts were dead :
Nor did he change ; but kept in lofty place
The wisdom which adversity had bred.

Glad were the vales, and every cottage-hearth ;
The Shepherd-lord was honoured more and more ;
And, ages after he was laid in earth,
"The good Lord Clifford" was the name he bore.

XXVI.

LINES,

COMPOSED A FEW MILES ABOVE TINTERN ABBEY, ON
REVISITING THE BANKS OF THE WYE
DURING A TOUR.

JULY 13, 1798.

FIVE years have past; five summers, with the length
Of five long winters! and again I hear
These waters, rolling from their mountain-springs
With a soft inland murmur *.—Once again
Do I behold these steep and lofty cliffs,
That on a wild secluded scene impress
Thoughts of more deep seclusion; and connect
The landscape with the quiet of the sky.
The day is come when I again repose
Here, under this dark sycamore, and view
These plots of cottage-ground, these orchard-tufts,
Which at this season, with their unripe fruits,
Are clad in one green hue, and lose themselves
'Mid groves and copses. Once again I see
These hedge-rows, hardly hedge-rows, little lines
Of sportive wood run wild: these pastoral farms,
Green to the very door; and wreaths of smoke
Sent up, in silence, from among the trees!
With some uncertain notice, as might seem
Of vagrant dwellers in the houseless woods,
Or of some Hermit's cave, where by his fire
The Hermit sits alone.

These beauteous forms,

Through a long absence, have not been to me
As is a landscape to a blind man's eye:
But oft, in lonely rooms, and 'mid the din
Of towns and cities, I have owed to them
In hours of weariness, sensations sweet,
Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart;
And passing even into my purer mind,
With tranquil restoration:—feelings too
Of unremembered pleasure: such, perhaps,
As have no slight or trivial influence
On that best portion of a good man's life,
His little, nameless, unremembered, acts
Of kindness and of love. Nor less, I trust,
To them I may have owed another gift,
Of aspect more sublime; that blessed mood,
In which the burthen of the mystery,
In which the heavy and the weary weight
Of all this unintelligible world,
Is lightened:—that serene and blessed mood,

* The river is not affected by the tides a few miles above
Tintern.

In which the affections gently lead us on,—
Until, the breath of this corporeal frame
And even the motion of our human blood
Almost suspended, we are laid asleep
In body, and become a living soul:
While with an eye made quiet by the power
Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
We see into the life of things.

If this
Be but a vain belief, yet, oh! how oft—
In darkness and amid the many shapes
Of joyless daylight; when the fretful stir
Unprofitable, and the fever of the world,
Have hung upon the beatings of my heart—
How oft, in spirit, have I turned to thee,
O sylvan Wye! thou wanderer thro' the woods,
How often has my spirit turned to thee!

And now, with gleams of half-extinguished
thought,
With many recognitions dim and faint,
And somewhat of a sad perplexity,
The picture of the mind revives again:
While here I stand, not only with the sense
Of present pleasure, but with pleasing thoughts
That in this moment there is life and food
For future years. And so I dare to hope,
Though changed, no doubt, from what I was when
first

I came among these hills; when like a roe
I bounded o'er the mountains, by the sides
Of the deep rivers, and the lonely streams,
Wherever nature led: more like a man
Flying from something that he dreads, than one
Who sought the thing he loved. For nature then
(The coarser pleasures of my boyish days,
And their glad animal movements all gone by)
To me was all in all.—I cannot paint
What then I was. The sounding cataract
Haunted me like a passion: the tall rock,
The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,
Their colours and their forms, were then to me
An appetite; a feeling and a love,
That had no need of a remoter charm,
By thought supplied, nor any interest
Unborrowed from the eye.—That time is past,
And all its aching joys are now no more,
And all its dizzy raptures. Not for this
Faint I, nor mourn nor murmur; other gifts
Have followed; for such loss, I would believe,
Abundant recompence. For I have learned
To look on nature, not as in the hour
Of thoughtless youth; but hearing oftentimes
The still, sad music of humanity,

Nor harsh nor grating, though of ample power
 To chasten and subdue. And I have felt
 A presence that disturbs me with the joy
 Of elevated thoughts ; a sense sublime
 Of something far more deeply interfused,
 Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
 And the round ocean and the living air,
 And the blue sky, and in the mind of man :
 A motion and a spirit, that impels
 All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
 And rolls through all things. Therefore am I still
 A lover of the meadows and the woods,
 And mountains ; and of all that we behold
 From this green earth ; of all the mighty world
 Of eye, and ear,—both what they half create *,
 And what perceive ; well pleased to recognise
 In nature and the language of the sense,
 The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,
 The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul
 Of all my moral being.

Nor perchance,
 If I were not thus taught, should I the more
 Suffer my genial spirits to decay :
 For thou art with me here upon the banks
 Of this fair river ; thou my dearest Friend,
 My dear, dear Friend ; and in thy voice I catch
 The language of my former heart, and read
 My former pleasures in the shooting lights
 Of thy wild eyes. Oh ! yet a little while
 May I behold in thee what I was once,
 My dear, dear Sister ! and this prayer I make,
 Knowing that Nature never did betray
 The heart that loved her ; 'tis her privilege,
 Through all the years of this our life, to lead
 From joy to joy : for she can so inform
 The mind that is within us, so impress
 With quietness and beauty, and so feed
 With lofty thoughts, that neither evil tongues,
 Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish men,
 Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all
 The dreary intercourse of daily life,
 Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb
 Our cheerful faith, that all which we behold
 Is full of blessings. Therefore let the moon
 Shine on thee in thy solitary walk ;
 And let the misty mountain-winds be free
 To blow against thee : and, in after years,
 When these wild ecstasies shall be matured
 Into a sober pleasure ; when thy mind
 Shall be a mansion for all lovely forms,
 Thy memory be as a dwelling-place

* This line has a close resemblance to an admirable line of Young's the exact expression of which I do not recollect.

For all sweet sounds and harmonies ; oh ! then,
 If solitude, or fear, or pain, or grief,
 Should be thy portion, with what healing thoughts
 Of tender joy wilt thou remember me,
 And these my exhortations ! Nor, perchance—
 If I should be where I no more can hear
 Thy voice, nor catch from thy wild eyes these gleams
 Of past existence—wilt thou then forget
 That on the banks of this delightful stream
 We stood together ; and that I, so long
 A worshipper of Nature, hither came
 Unwearied in that service : rather say
 With warmer love—oh ! with far deeper zeal
 Of holier love. Nor wilt thou then forget,
 That after many wanderings, many years
 Of absence, these steep woods and lofty cliffs,
 And this green pastoral landscape, were to me
 More dear, both for themselves and for thy sake !

1798.

XXVII.

It is no Spirit who from heaven hath flown,
 And is descending on his embassy ;
 Nor Traveller gone from earth the heavens to espy !
 'Tis Hesperus—there he stands with glittering
 crown,

First admonition that the sun is down !
 For yet it is broad day-light : clouds pass by ;
 A few are near him still—and now the sky,
 He hath it to himself—'tis all his own.
 O most ambitious Star ! an inquest wrought
 Within me when I recognised thy light ;
 A moment I was startled at the sight :
 And, while I gazed, there came to me a thought
 That I might step beyond my natural race
 As thou seem'st now to do ; might one day trace
 Some ground not mine ; and, strong her strength
 above,

My Soul, an Apparition in the place,
 Tread there with steps that no one shall reprove !

1803.

XXVIII.

FRENCH REVOLUTION,

AS IT APPEARED TO ENTHUSIASTS AT ITS COMMENCEMENT *.
 REPRINTED FROM "THE FRIEND."

Oh ! pleasant exercise of hope and joy !
 For mighty were the auxiliars which then stood

* This and the Extract, page 62, and the first Piece of this Class are from the unpublished Poem of which some account is given in the Preface to the EXCURSION.

Upon our side, we who were strong in love!
 Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,
 But to be young was very heaven!—Oh! times,
 In which the meagre, stale, forbidding ways
 Of custom, law, and statute, took at once
 The attraction of a country in romance!
 When Reason seemed the most to assert her rights,
 When most intent on making of herself
 A prime Enchantress—to assist the work,
 Which then was going forward in her name!
 Not favoured spots alone, but the whole earth,
 The beauty wore of promise, that which sets
 (As at some moment might not be unfelt
 Among the bowers of paradise itself)
 The budding rose above the rose full blown.
 What temper at the prospect did not wake
 To happiness unthought of? The inert
 Were roused, and lively natures rapt away!
 They who had fed their childhood upon dreams,
 The playfellows of fancy, who had made
 All powers of swiftness, subtilty, and strength
 Their ministers,—who in lordly wise had stirred
 Among the grandest objects of the sense,
 And dealt with whatsoever they found there
 As if they had within some lurking right
 To wield it;—they, too, who, of gentle mood,
 Had watched all gentle motions, and to these
 Had fitted their own thoughts, schemers more mild,
 And in the region of their peaceful selves;—
 Now was it that both found, the meek and lofty
 Did both find, helpers to their heart's desire,
 And stuff at hand, plastic as they could wish;
 Were called upon to exercise their skill,
 Not in Utopia, subterranean fields,
 Or some secreted island, Heaven knows where!
 But in the very world, which is the world
 Of all of us,—the place where in the end
 We find our happiness, or not at all!

1805.

XXIX.

YES, it was the mountain Echo,
 Solitary, clear, profound,
 Answering to the shouting Cuckoo,
 Giving to her sound for sound!

Unsolicited reply
 To a babbling wanderer sent;
 Like her ordinary cry,
 Like—but oh, how different!

Hears not also mortal Life?
 Hear not we, unthinking Creatures!

Slaves of folly, love, or strife—
 Voices of two different natures?

Have not *we* too?—yes, we have
 Answers, and we know not whence;
 Echoes from beyond the grave,
 Recognised intelligence!

Such rebounds our inward ear
 Catches sometimes from afar—
 Listen, ponder, hold them dear;
 For of God,—of God they are.

1806.

XXX.

TO A SKY-LARK.

ETHEREAL minstrel! pilgrim of the sky!
 Dost thou despise the earth where cares abound?
 Or, while the wings aspire, are heart and eye
 Both with thy nest upon the dewy ground?
 Thy nest which thou canst drop into at will,
 Those quivering wings composed, that music
 still!

Leave to the nightingale her shady wood;
 A privacy of glorious light is thine;
 Whence thou dost pour upon the world a flood
 Of harmony, with instinct more divine;
 Type of the wise who soar, but never roam;
 True to the kindred points of Heaven and Home!

1825.

XXXI.

LAODAMIA.

“WITH sacrifice before the rising morn
 Vows have I made by fruitless hope inspired;
 And from the infernal Gods, ’mid shades forlorn
 Of night, my slaughtered Lord have I required:
 Celestial pity I again implore;—
 Restore him to my sight—great Jove, restore!”

So speaking, and by fervent love endowed
 With faith, the Suppliant heavenward lifts her hands;
 While, like the sun emerging from a cloud,
 Her countenance brightens—and her eye expands;
 Her bosom heaves and spreads, her stature grows;
 And she expects the issue in repose.

O terror ! what hath she perceived ?—O joy !
 What doth she look on ?—whom doth she behold ?
 Her Hero slain upon the beach of Troy ?
 His vital presence ? his corporeal mould ?
 It is—if sense deceive her not—’tis He !
 And a God leads him, winged Mercury !

Mild Hermes spake—and touched her with his
 wand
 That calms all fear ; “Such grace hath crowned
 thy prayer,
 Laodamia ! that at Jove’s command
 Thy Husband walks the paths of upper air :
 He comes to tarry with thee three hours’ space ;
 Accept the gift, behold him face to face !”

Forth sprang the impassioned Queen her Lord to
 clasp ;
 Again that consummation she essayed ;
 But unsubstantial Form eludes her grasp
 As often as that eager grasp was made.
 The Phantom parts—but parts to re-unite,
 And re-assume his place before her sight.

“Protesilæus, lo ! thy guide is gone !
 Confirm, I pray, the vision with thy voice :
 This is our palace,—yonder is thy throne ;
 Speak, and the floor thou tread’st on will rejoice.
 Not to appal me have the gods bestowed
 This precious boon ; and blest a sad abode.”

“Great Jove, Laodamia ! doth not leave
 His gifts imperfect :—Spectre though I be,
 I am not sent to scare thee or deceive ;
 But in reward of thy fidelity.
 And something also did my worth obtain ;
 For fearless virtue bringeth boundless gain.

Thou knowest, the Delphic oracle foretold
 That the first Greek who touched the Trojan strand
 Should die ; but me the threat could not withhold :
 A generous cause a victim did demand ;
 And forth I leapt upon the sandy plain ;
 A self-devoted chief—by Hector slain.”

“Supreme of Heroes—bravest, noblest, best !
 Thy matchless courage I bewail no more,
 Which then, when tens of thousands were deprest
 By doubt, propelled thee to the fatal shore ;
 Thou found’st—and I forgive thee—here thou art—
 A nobler counsellor than my poor heart.

But thou, though capable of sternest deed,
 Wert kind as resolute, and good as brave ;
 And he, whose power restores thee, hath decreed
 Thou should’st elude the malice of the grave :
 Redundant are thy locks, thy lips as fair
 As when their breath enriched Thessalian air.

No Spectre greets me,—no vain Shadow this ;
 Come, blooming Hero, place thee by my side !
 Give, on this well known couch, one nuptial kiss
 To me, this day, a second time thy bride !”
 Jove frowned in heaven : the conscious Parca
 threw
 Upon those roseate lips a Stygian hue.

“This visage tells thee that my doom is past :
 Nor should the change be mourned, even if the
 joys
 Of sense were able to return as fast
 And surely as they vanish. Earth destroys
 Those raptures duly—Erebus disdains :
 Calm pleasures there abide—majestic pains.

Be taught, O faithful Consort, to control
 Rebellious passion : for the Gods approve
 The depth, and not the tumult, of the soul ;
 A fervent, not ungovernable, love.
 Thy transports moderate ; and meekly mourn
 When I depart, for brief is my sojourn—”

“Ah, wherefore ?—Did not Hercules by force
 Wrest from the guardian Monster of the tomb
 Alcestit, a reanimated corse,
 Given back to dwell on earth in vernal bloom ?
 Medea’s spells dispersed the weight of years,
 And Æson stood a youth ’mid youthful peers.

The Gods to us are merciful—and they
 Yet further may relent : for mightier far
 Than strength of nerve and sinew, or the sway
 Of magic potent over sun and star,
 Is love, though oft to agony distrust,
 And though his favourite seat be feeble woman’s
 breast.

But if thou goest, I follow—” “Peace !” he said,—
 She looked upon him and was calmed and cheered ;
 The ghastly colour from his lips had fled ;
 In his deportment, shape, and mien, appeared
 Elysian beauty, melancholy grace,
 Brought from a pensive though a happy place.

He spake of love, such love as Spirits feel
In worlds whose course is equable and pure ;
No fears to beat away—no strife to heal—
The past unsighed for, and the future sure ;
Spake of heroic arts in graver mood
Revived, with finer harmony pursued ;

Of all that is most beauteous—imaged there
In happier beauty ; more pellucid streams,
An ampler ether, a diviner air,
And fields invested with purpureal gleams ;
Climes which the sun, who sheds the brightest day
Earth knows, is all unworthy to survey.

Yet there the Soul shall enter which hath earned
That privilege by virtue.—“ Ill,” said he,
“ The end of man’s existence I discerned,
Who from ignoble games and revelry
Could draw, when we had parted, vain delight,
While tears were thy best pastime, day and night ;

And while my youthful peers before my eyes
(Each hero following his peculiar bent)
Prepared themselves for glorious enterprise
By martial sports,—or, seated in the tent,
Chieftains and kings in council were detained ;
What time the fleet at Aulis lay enchained.

The wished-for wind was given :—I then revolved
The oracle, upon the silent sea ;
And, if no worthier led the way, resolved
That, of a thousand vessels, mine should be
The foremost prow in pressing to the strand,—
Mine the first blood that tinged the Trojan sand.

Yet bitter, oft-times bitter, was the pang
When of thy loss I thought, beloved Wife !
On thee too fondly did my memory hang,
And on the joys we shared in mortal life,—
The paths which we had trod—these fountains,
flowers ;
My new-planned cities, and unfinished towers.

But should suspense permit the Foe to cry,
‘ Behold they tremble !—haughty their array,
Yet of their number no one dares to die ? ’
In soul I swept the indignity away :
Old frailties then recurred :—but lofty thought,
In act embodied, my deliverance wrought.

And Thou, though strong in love, art all too weak
In reason, in self-government too slow ;
I counsel thee by fortitude to seek
Our blest re-union in the shades below.
The invisible world with thee hath sympathised ;
Be thy affections raised and solemnised.

Learn, by a mortal yearning, to ascend—
Seeking a higher object. Love was given,
Encouraged, sanctioned, chiefly for that end ;
For this the passion to excess was driven—
That self might be annulled : her bondage prove
The fetters of a dream, opposed to love.”——

Aloud she shrieked ! for Hermes re-appears !
Round the dear Shade she would have clung—^{’tis}
vain :

The hours are past—too brief had they been years ;
And him no mortal effort can detain :
Swift, toward the realms that know not earthly day,
He through the portal takes his silent way,
And on the palace-floor a lifeless corse She lay.

Thus, all in vain exhorted and reproved,
She perished ; and, as for a wilful crime,
By the just Gods whom no weak pity moved,
Was doomed to wear out her appointed time,
Apart from happy Ghosts, that gather flowers
Of blissful quiet ’mid unfading bowers.

—Yet tears to human suffering are due ;
And mortal hopes defeated and o’erthrown
Are mourned by man, and not by man alone,
As fondly he believes.—Upon the side
Of Hellespont (such faith was entertained)
A knot of spiry trees for ages grew
From out the tomb of him for whom she died ;
And ever, when such stature they had gained
That Ilium’s walls were subject to their view,
The trees’ tall summits withered at the sight ;
A constant interchange of growth and blight ! *

1814.

* For the account of these long-lived trees, see Pliny’s
Natural History, lib. xvi. cap. 44. ; and for the features in
the character of Protesilaus see the Iphigenia in Aulis of
Euripides. Virgil places the Shade of Laodamia in a
mournful region, among unhappy Lovers,

—His Laodamia

It Comes.——

XXXII.

DION.

(SEE PLUTARCH).

I.

SERENE, and fitted to embrace,
 Where'er he turned, a swan-like grace
 Of haughtiness without pretence,
 And to unfold a still magnificence,
 Was princely Dion, in the power
 And beauty of his happier hour.
 And what pure homage *then* did wait
 On Dion's virtues, while the lunar beam
 Of Plato's genius, from its lofty sphere,
 Fell round him in the grove of Academe,
 Softening their inbred dignity austere—
 That he, not too elate
 With self-sufficing solitude,
 But with majestic lowliness endued,
 Might in the universal bosom reign,
 And from affectionate observance gain
 Help, under every change of adverse fate.

II.

Five thousand warriors—O the rapturous day!
 Each crowned with flowers, and armed with spear
 and shield,
 Or ruder weapon which their course might yield,
 To Syracuse advance in bright array.
 Who leads them on?—The anxious people see
 Long-exiled Dion marching at their head,
 He also crowned with flowers of Sicily,
 And in a white, far-beaming, corslet clad!
 Pure transport undisturbed by doubt or fear
 The gazers feel; and, rushing to the plain,
 Salute those strangers as a holy train
 Or blest procession (to the Immortals dear)
 That brought their precious liberty again.
 Lo! when the gates are entered, on each hand,
 Down the long street, rich goblets filled with wine

In seemly order stand,

On tables set, as if for rites divine;—
 And, as the great Deliverer marches by,
 He looks on festal ground with fruits bestrown;
 And flowers are on his person thrown
 In boundless prodigality;
 Nor doth the general voice abstain from prayer,
 Invoking Dion's tutelary care,
 As if a very Deity he were!

III.

Mourn, hills and groves of Attica! and mourn
 Iliissus, bending o'er thy classic urn!

Mourn, and lament for him whose spirit dreads
 Your once sweet memory, studious walks and
 shades!

For him who to divinity aspired,
 Not on the breath of popular applause,
 But through dependence on the sacred laws
 Framed in the schools where Wisdom dwelt retired,
 Intent to trace the ideal path of right
 (More fair than heaven's broad causeway paved
 with stars)

Which Dion learned to measure with sublime
 delight;—

But He hath overleaped the eternal bars;
 And, following guides whose craft holds no consent
 With aught that breathes the ethereal element,
 Hath stained the robes of civil power with blood,
 Unjustly shed, though for the public good.
 Whence doubts that came too late, and wishes vain,
 Hollow excuses, and triumphant pain;
 And oft his cogitations sink as low
 As, through the abysses of a joyless heart,
 The heaviest plummet of despair can go—
 But whence that sudden check? that fearful start!

He hears an uncouth sound—

Anon his lifted eyes

Saw, at a long-drawn gallery's dusky bound,
 A Shape of more than mortal size
 And hideous aspect, stalking round and round!

A woman's garb the Phantom wore,
 And fiercely swept the marble floor,—
 Like Auster whirling to and fro,

His force on Caspian foam to try;

Or Boreas when he scours the snow
 That skins the plains of Thessaly,
 Or when aloft on Mænalus he stops
 His flight, 'mid eddying pine-tree tops!

IV.

So, but from toil less sign of profit reaping,
 The sullen Spectre to her purpose bowed,

Sweeping—vehemently sweeping—

No pause admitted, no design avowed!

“Avaunt, inexplicable Guest!—avaunt,”

Exclaimed the Chieftain—“let me rather see

The coronal that coiling vipers make;

The torch that flames with many a lurid flake,

And the long train of doleful pageantry

Which they behold, whom vengeful Furies haunt;

Who, while they struggle from the scourge to flee,

Move where the blasted soil is not unworn,

And, in their anguish, bear what other minds have
 borne!”

v.

But Shapes that come not at an earthly call,
Will not depart when mortal voices bid;
Lords of the visionary eye whose lid,
Once raised, remains aghast, and will not fall!
Ye Gods, thought He, that servile Implement
Obeys a mystical intent!
Your Minister would brush away
The spots that to my soul adhere;
But should she labour night and day,
They will not, cannot disappear;
Whence angry perturbations,—and that look
Which no Philosophy can brook!

vi.

Ill-fated Chief! there are whose hopes are built
Upon the ruins of thy glorious name;
Who, through the portal of one moment's guilt,
Pursue thee with their deadly aim!
O matchless perfidy! portentous lust
Of monstrous crime!—that horror-striking blade,
Drawn in defiance of the Gods, hath laid
The noble Syracusan low in dust!
Shudder'd the walls—the marble city wept—
And sylvan places heaved a pensive sigh;
But in calm peace the appointed Victim slept,
As he had fallen in magnanimity;
Of spirit too capacious to require
That Destiny her course should change; too just
To his own native greatness to desire
That wretched boon, days lengthened by mistrust.
So were the hopeless troubles, that involved
The soul of Dion, instantly dissolved.
Released from life and cares of princely state,
He left this moral grafted on his Fate;
'Him only pleasure leads, and peace attends,
Him, only him, the shield of Jove defends,
Whose means are fair and spotless as his ends.'

1816.

xxxiii.

THE PASS OF KIRKSTONE.

i.

WITHIN the mind strong fancies work,
A deep delight the bosom thrills,
Oft as I pass along the fork
Of these fraternal hills:
Where, save the rugged road, we find
No appanage of human kind,
Nor hint of man; if stone or rock
Seem not his handy-work to mock
By something cognizably shaped;

Mockery—or model roughly hewn,
And left as if by earthquake strewn,
Or from the Flood escaped:
Altars for Druid service fit;
(But where no fire was ever lit,
Unless the glow-worm to the skies
Thence offer nightly sacrifice)
Wrinkled Egyptian monument;
Green moss-grown tower; or hoary tent;
Tents of a camp that never shall be razed—
On which four thousand years have gazed!

ii.

Ye plough-shares sparkling on the slopes!
Ye snow-white lambs that trip
Imprisoned 'mid the formal props
Of restless ownership!
Ye trees, that may to-morrow fall
To feed the insatiate Prodigal!
Lawns, houses, chattels, groves, and fields,
All that the fertile valley shields;
Wages of folly—baits of crime,
Of life's uneasy game the stake,
Playthings that keep the eyes awake
Of drowsy, dotard Time;—
O care! O guilt!—O vales and plains,
Here, 'mid his own unweaved domains,
A Genius dwells, that can subdue
At once all memory of You,—
Most potent when mists veil the sky,
Mists that distort and magnify;
While the coarse rushes, to the sweeping breeze,
Sigh forth their ancient melodies!

iii.

List to those shriller notes!—*that* march
Perchance was on the blast,
When, through this Height's inverted arch,
Rome's earliest legion passed!
—They saw, adventurously impelled,
And older eyes than theirs beheld,
This block—and yon, whose church-like frame
Gives to this savage Pass its name.
Aspiring Road! that lov'd to hide
Thy daring in a vapoury bourn,
Not seldom may the hour return
When thou shalt be my guide:
And I (as all men may find cause,
When life is at a weary pause,
And they have panted up the hill
Of duty with reluctant will)
Be thankful, even though tired and faint,
For the rich bounties of constraint;
Whence oft invigorating transports flow
That choice lacked courage to bestow!

IV.

My Soul was grateful for delight
 That wore a threatening brow ;
 A veil is lifted—can she slight
 The scene that opens now ?
 Though habitation none appear,
 The greenness tells, man must be there ;
 The shelter—that the perspective
 Is of the clime in which we live ;
 Where Toil pursues his daily round ;
 Where Pity sheds sweet tears—and Love,
 In woodbine bower or birchen grove,
 Inflicts his tender wound.
 —Who comes not hither ne'er shall know
 How beautiful the world below ;
 Nor can he guess how lightly leaps
 The brook adown the rocky steeps.
 Farewell, thou desolate Domain !
 Hope, pointing to the cultured plain,
 Carols like a shepherd-boy ;
 And who is she ?—Can that be Joy !
 Who, with a sunbeam for her guide,
 Smoothly skims the meadows wide ;
 While Faith, from yonder opening cloud,
 To hill and vale proclaims aloud,
 " Whate'er the weak may dread, the wicked dare,
 Thy lot, O Man, is good, thy portion fair !"

1817.

XXXIV.

TO ENTERPRISE.

KEEP for the Young the impassioned smile
 Shed from thy countenance, as I see thee stand
 High on that chalky cliff of Briton's Isle,
 A slender volume grasping in thy hand—
 (Perchance the pages that relate
 The various turns of Crusoe's fate)—
 Ah, spare the exulting smile,
 And drop thy pointing finger bright
 As the first flash of beacon light ;
 But neither veil thy head in shadows dim,
 Nor turn thy face away
 From One who, in the evening of his day,
 To thee would offer no presumptuous hymn !

I.

Bold Spirit ! who art free to rove
 Among the starry courts of Jove,
 And oft in splendour dost appear
 Embodied to poetic eyes,
 While traversing this nether sphere,
 Where Mortals call thee ENTERPRISE.

Daughter of Hope ! her favourite Child,
 Whom she to young Ambition bore,
 When hunter's arrow first defiled
 The grove, and stained the turf with gore ;
 Thee wingèd Fancy took, and nursed
 On broad Euphrates' palmy shore,
 And where the mightier Waters burst
 From caves of Indian mountains hoar !
 She wrapped thee in a panther's skin ;
 And Thou, thy favourite food to win,
 The flame-eyed eagle oft wouldst scare
 From her rock-fortress in mid air,
 With infant shout ; and often sweep,
 Paired with the ostrich, o'er the plain ;
 Or, tired with sport, wouldst sink asleep
 Upon the couchant lion's mane !
 With rolling years thy strength increased ;
 And, far beyond thy native East,
 To thee, by varying titles known
 As variously thy power was shown,
 Did incense-bearing altars rise,
 Which caught the blaze of sacrifice,
 From suppliants panting for the skies !

II.

What though this ancient Earth be trod
 No more by step of Demi-god
 Mounting from glorious deed to deed
 As thou from clime to clime didst lead ;
 Yet still, the bosom beating high,
 And the hushed farewell of an eye
 Where no procrastinating gaze
 A last infirmity betrays,
 Prove that thy heaven-descended sway
 Shall ne'er submit to cold decay.
 By thy divinity impelled,
 The Stripling seeks the tented field ;
 The aspiring Virgin kneels ; and, pale
 With awe, receives the hallowed veil,
 A soft and tender Heroine
 Vowed to severer discipline ;
 Inflamed by thee, the blooming Boy
 Makes of the whistling shrouds a toy,
 And of the ocean's dismal breast
 A play-ground,—or a couch of rest ;
 'Mid the blank world of snow and ice,
 Thou to his dangers dost enchain
 The Chamois-chaser awed in vain
 By chasm or dizzy precipice ;
 And hast Thou not with triumph seen
 How soaring Mortals glide between
 Or through the clouds, and brave the light
 With bolder than Icarian flight ?

How they, in bells of crystal, dive—
 Where winds and waters cease to strive—
 For no unholy visitings,
 Among the monsters of the Deep ;
 And all the sad and precious things
 Which there in ghastly silence sleep ?
 Or, adverse tides and currents headed,
 And breathless calms no longer dreaded,
 In never-slackening voyage go
 Straight as an arrow from the bow ;
 And, slighting sails and scorning oars,
 Keep faith with Time on distant shores ?
 —Within our fearless reach are placed
 The secrets of the burning Waste ;
 Egyptian tombs unlock their dead,
 Nile trembles at his fountain head ;
 Thou speak'st—and lo ! the polar Seas
 Unbosom their last mysteries.
 —But oh ! what transports, what sublimereward,
 Won from the world of mind, dost thou prepare
 For philosophic Sage ; or high-souled Bard
 Who, for thy service trained in lonely woods,
 Hath fed on pageants floating through the air,
 Or calentured in depth of limpid floods ;
 Nor grieves—tho' doomed thro' silent night to bear
 The domination of his glorious themes,
 Or struggle in the net-work of thy dreams !

III.

If there be movements in the Patriot's soul,
 From source still deeper, and of higher worth,
 'Tis thine the quickening impulse to control,
 And in due season send the mandate forth ;
 Thy call a prostrate Nation can restore,
 When but a single Mind resolves to crouch no
 more.

IV.

Dread Minister of wrath !
 Who to their destined punishment dost urge
 The Pharaohs of the earth, the men of hardened
 heart !
 Not unassisted by the flattering stars,
 Thou strew'st temptation o'er the path
 When they in pomp depart
 With trampling horses and refulgent cars—
 Soon to be swallowed by the briny surge ;
 Or cast, for lingering death, on unknown strands ;
 Or caught amid a whirl of desert sands—
 An Army now, and now a living hill
 That a brief while heaves with convulsive throes—
 Then all is still ;
 Or, to forget their madness and their woes,
 Wrapt in a winding-sheet of spotless snows !

V.

Back flows the willing current of my Song :
 If to provoke such doom the Impious dare,
 Why should it daunt a blameless prayer ?
 —Bold Goddess ! range our Youth among ;
 Nor let thy genuine impulse fail to beat
 In hearts no longer young ;
 Still may a veteran Few have pride
 In thoughts whose sternness makes them sweet ;
 In fixed resolves by Reason justified ;
 That to their object cleave like sleet
 Whitening a pine tree's northern side,
 When fields are naked far and wide,
 And withered leaves, from earth's cold breast
 Up-caught in whirlwinds, nowhere can find rest.

VI.

But, if such homage thou disdain
 As doth with mellowing years agree,
 One rarely absent from thy train
 More humble favours may obtain
 For thy contented Votary.
 She, who incites the frolic lambs
 In presence of their heedless dams,
 And to the solitary fawn
 Vouchsafes her lessons, bounteous Nymph
 That wakes the breeze, the sparkling lymph
 Doth hurry to the lawn ;
 She, who inspires that strain of joyance holy
 Which the sweet Bird, misnamed the melancholy
 Pours forth in shady groves, shall plead for me ;
 And vernal mornings opening bright
 With views of undefined delight,
 And cheerful songs, and suns that shine
 On busy days, with thankful nights, be mine.

VII.

But thou, O Goddess ! in thy favourite Isle
 (Freedom's impregnable redoubt,
 The wide earth's store-house fenced about
 With breakers roaring to the gales
 That stretch a thousand thousand sails)
 Quickened the slothful, and exalt the vile !—
 Thy impulse is the life of Fame ;
 Glad Hope would almost cease to be
 If torn from thy society ;
 And Love, when worthiest of his name,
 Is proud to walk the earth with Thee !

XXXV.

TO——,

ON HER FIRST ASCENT TO THE SUMMIT OF HELVELLYN.

INMATE of a mountain-dwelling,
Thou hast clomb aloft, and gazed
From the watch-towers of Helvellyn;
Awed, delighted, and amazed!

Potent was the spell that bound thee
Not unwilling to obey;
For blue Ether's arms, flung round thee,
Stilled the pantings of dismay.

Lo! the dwindled woods and meadows;
What a vast abyss is there!
Lo! the clouds, the solemn shadows,
And the glistenings—heavenly fair!

And a record of commotion
Which a thousand ridges yield;
Ridge, and gulf, and distant ocean
Gleaming like a silver shield!

Maiden! now take flight;—inherit
Alps or Andes—they are thine!
With the morning's roseate Spirit,
Sweep their length of snowy line;

Or survey their bright dominions
In the gorgeous colours drest
Flung from off the purple pinions,
Evening spreads throughout the west!

Thine are all the coral fountains
Warbling in each sparry vault
Of the untrodden lunar mountains;
Listen to their songs!—or halt,

To Niphates' top invited,
Whither spiteful Satan steered;
Or descend where the ark alighted,
When the green earth re-appeared;

For the power of hills is on thee,
As was witnessed through thine eye
Then, when old Helvellyn won thee
To confess their majesty!

1816.

XXXVI.

TO A YOUNG LADY,

WHO HAD BEEN REPROACHED FOR TAKING LONG WALKS
IN THE COUNTRY.

DEAR Child of Nature, let them rail!
—There is a nest in a green dale,
A harbour and a hold;
Where thou, a Wife and Friend, shalt see
Thy own heart-stirring days, and be
A light to young and old.

There, healthy as a shepherd boy,
And treading among flowers of joy
Which at no season fade,
Thou, while thy babes around thee cling,
Shalt show us how divine a thing
A Woman may be made.

Thy thoughts and feelings shall not die,
Nor leave thee, when grey hairs are nigh
A melancholy slave;
But an old age serene and bright,
And lovely as a Lapland night,
Shall lead thee to thy grave.

1803.

XXXVII.

WATER-FOWL.

'Let me be allowed the aid of verse to describe the evolutions which these visitants sometimes perform, on a fine day towards the close of winter.'—*Extract from the Author's Book on the Lakes.*

MARK how the feathered tenants of the flood,
With grace of motion that might scarcely seem
Inferior to angelical, prolong
Their curious pastime! shaping in mid air
(And sometimes with ambitious wing that soars
High as the level of the mountain-tops)
A circuit ampler than the lake beneath—
Their own domain; but ever, while intent
On tracing and retracing that large round,
Their jubilant activity evolves
Hundreds of curves and circlets, to and fro,
Upward and downward, progress intricate
Yet unperplexed, as if one spirit swayed
Their indefatigable flight. 'Tis done—
Ten times, or more, I fancied it had ceased;
But lo! the vanished company again
Ascending; they approach—I hear their wings,
Faint, faint at first; and then an eager sound,
Past in a moment—and as faint again!
They tempt the sun to sport amid their plumes;

They tempt the water, or the gleaming ice,
To show them a fair image; 'tis themselves,
Their own fair forms, upon the glimmering plain,
Painted more soft and fair as they descend
Almost to touch;—then up again aloft,
Up with a sally and a flash of speed,
As if they scorned both resting-place and rest!

1812.

XXXVIII.

VIEW FROM THE TOP OF BLACK COMB.

THIS Height a ministering Angel might select:
For from the summit of BLACK COMB (dread name
Derived from clouds and storms!) the amplest range
Of unobstructed prospect may be seen
That British ground commands:—low dusky tracts,
Where Trent is nursed, far southward! Cambrian
hills

To the south-west, a multitudinous show;
And, in a line of eye-sight linked with these,
The hoary peaks of Scotland that give birth
To Tiviot's stream, to Annan, Tweed, and Clyde:—
Crowding the quarter whence the sun comes forth
Gigantic mountains rough with crags; beneath,
Right at the imperial station's western base
Main ocean, breaking audibly, and stretched
Far into silent regions blue and pale;—
And visibly engirding Mona's Isle
That, as we left the plain, before our sight
Stood like a lofty mount, uplifting slowly
(Above the convex of the watery globe)
Into clear view the cultured fields that streak
Her habitable shores, but now appears
A dwindled object, and submits to lie
At the spectator's feet.—Yon azure ridge,
Is it a perishable cloud? Or there
Do we behold the line of Erin's coast?
Land sometimes by the roving shepherd-swain
(Like the bright confines of another world)
Not doubtfully perceived.—Look homeward now!
In depth, in height, in circuit, how serene
The spectacle, how pure!—Of Nature's works,
In earth, and air, and earth-embracing sea,
A revelation infinite it seems;
Display august of man's inheritance,
Of Britain's calm felicity and power!

1813.

Black Comb stands at the southern extremity of
Cumberland: its base covers a much greater extent of
ground than any other mountain in those parts; and,
from its situation, the summit commands a more extensive
view than any other point in Britain.

XXXIX.

THE HAUNTED TREE.

TO——.

THOSE silver clouds collected round the sun
His mid-day warmth abate not, seeming less
To overshadow than multiply his beams
By soft reflection—grateful to the sky,
To rocks, fields, woods. Nor doth our human
sense

Ask, for its pleasure, screen or canopy
More ample than the time-dismantled Oak
Spreads o'er this tuft of heath, which now, attired
In the whole fulness of its bloom, affords
Couch beautiful as e'er for earthly use
Was fashioned; whether by the hand of Art,
That eastern Sultan, amid flowers enwrought
On silken tissue, might diffuse his limbs
In languor; or, by Nature, for repose
Of panting Wood-nymph, wearied with the chase.
O Lady! fairer in thy Poet's sight
Than fairest spiritual creature of the groves,
Approach;—and, thus invited, crown with rest
The noon-tide hour: though truly some there are
Whose footsteps superstitiously avoid
This venerable Tree; for, when the wind
Blows keenly, it sends forth a creaking sound
(Above the general roar of woods and crags)
Distinctly heard from far—a doleful note!
As if (so Grecian shepherds would have deemed)
The Hamadryad, pent within, bewailed
Some bitter wrong. Nor is it unbelieved,
By ruder fancy, that a troubled ghost
Haunts the old trunk; lamenting deeds of which
The flowery ground is conscious. But no wind
Sweeps now along this elevated ridge;
Not even a zephyr stirs;—the obnoxious Tree
Is mute; and, in his silence, would look down,
O lovely Wanderer of the trackless hills,
On thy reclining form with more delight
Than his coevals in the sheltered vale
Seem to participate, the while they view
Their own far-stretching arms and leafy heads
Vividly pictured in some glassy pool,
That, for a brief space, checks the hurrying
stream!

1819.

XL.

THE TRIAD.

Show me the noblest Youth of present time,
Whose trembling fancy would to love give birth;
Some God or Hero, from the Olympian clime
Returned, to seek a Consort upon earth;
Or, in no doubtful prospect, let me see
The brightest star of ages yet to be,
And I will mate and match him blissfully.

I will not fetch a Naiad from a flood
Pure as herself—(song lacks not mightier power)
Nor leaf-crowned Dryad from a pathless wood,
Nor Sea-nymph glistening from her coral bower;
Mere Mortals bodied forth in vision still,
Shall with Mount Ida's triple lustre fill
The chaster coverts of a British hill.

“Appear!—obey my lyre's command!
Come, like the Graces, hand in hand!
For ye, though not by birth allied,
Are Sisters in the bond of love;
Nor shall the tongue of envious pride
Presume those interweavings to reprove
In you, which that fair progeny of Jove,
Learned from the tuneful spheres that glide
In endless union, earth and sea above.”
—I sing in vain;—the pines have hushed their
waving:

A peerless Youth expectant at my side,
Breathless as they, with unabated craving
Looks to the earth, and to the vacant air;
And, with a wandering eye that seems to chide,
Asks of the clouds what occupants they hide:—
But why solicit more than sight could bear,
By casting on a moment all we dare?
Invoke we those bright Beings one by one;
And what was boldly promised, truly shall be done.

“Fear not a constraining measure!
—Yielding to this gentle spell,
Lucida! from domes of pleasure,
Or from cottage-sprinkled dell,
Come to regions solitary,
Where the eagle builds her airy,
Above the hermit's long-forsaken cell!”
—She comes!—behold
That Figure, like a ship with snow-white sail!
Nearer she draws; a breeze uplifts her veil;
Upon her coming wait
As pure a sunshine and as soft a gale

As e'er, on herbage covering earthly mold,
Tempted the bird of Juno to unfold
His richest splendour—when his veering gait
And every motion of his starry train
Seem governed by a strain
Of music, audible to him alone.

“O Lady, worthy of earth's proudest throne!
Nor less, by excellence of nature, fit
Beside an unambitious hearth to sit
Domestic queen, where grandeur is unknown;
What living man could fear
The worst of Fortune's malice, wert Thou near,
Humbling that lily-stem, thy sceptre meek,
That its fair flowers may from his cheek
Brush the too happy tear?

—Queen, and handmaid lowly!
Whose skill can speed the day with lively cares,
And banish melancholy
By all that mind invents or hand prepares;
O Thou, against whose lip, without its smile
And in its silence even, no heart is proof;
Whose goodness, sinking deep, would reconcile
The softest Nursling of a gorgeous palace
To the bare life beneath the hawthorn-roof
Of Sherwood's Archer, or in caves of Wallace—
Who that hath seen thy beauty could content
His soul with but a *glimpse* of heavenly day?
Who that hath loved thee, but would lay
His strong hand on the wind, if it were bent
To take thee in thy majesty away?
—Pass onward (even the glancing deer
Till we depart intrude not here;)
That mossy slope, o'er which the woodbine throws
A canopy, is smoothed for thy repose!”

Glad moment is it when the throng
Of warblers in full concert strong
Strive, and not vainly strive, to rout
The lagging shower, and force coy Phoebus out,
Met by the rainbow's form divine,
Issuing from her cloudy shrine;—
So may the thrillings of the lyre
Prevail to further our desire,
While to these shades a sister Nymph I call.

“Come, if the notes thine ear may pierce,
Come, youngest of the lovely Three,
Submissive to the might of verse
And the dear voice of harmony,
By none more deeply felt than Thee!”
—I sang; and lo! from pastimes virginal
She hastens to the tents
Of nature, and the lonely elements.

Air sparkles round her with a dazzling sheen ;
 But mark her glowing cheek, her vesture green !
 And, as if wishful to disarm
 Or to repay the potent Charm,
 She bears the stringèd lute of old romance,
 That cheered the trellised arbour's privacy,
 And soothed war-wearied knights in rafters hall.
 How vivid, yet how delicate, her glee !
 So tripped the Muse, inventress of the dance ;
 So, truant in waste woods, the blithe Euphrosyne !

But the ringlets of that head
 Why are they ungarlanded ?
 Why bedeck her temples less
 Than the simplest shepherdess ?
 Is it not a brow inviting
 Choicest flowers that ever breathed,
 Which the myrtle would delight in
 With Idalian rose enwreathed ?
 But her humility is well content
 With *one* wild floweret (call it not forlorn)
 FLOWER OF THE WINDS, beneath her bosom worn—
 Yet more for love than ornament.

Open, ye thickets ! let her fly,
 Swift as a Thracian Nymph o'er field and height !
 For She, to all but those who love her, shy,
 Would gladly vanish from a Stranger's sight ;
 Though where she is beloved and loves,
 Light as the wheeling butterfly she moves ;
 Her happy spirit as a bird is free,
 That rifles blossoms on a tree,
 Turning them inside out with arch audacity.
 Alas ! how little can a moment show
 Of an eye where feeling plays
 In ten thousand dewy rays ;
 A face o'er which a thousand shadows go !
 —She stops—is fastened to that rivulet's side ;
 And there (while, with sedate mien,
 O'er timid waters that have scarcely left
 Their birth-place in the rocky cleft
 She bends) at leisure may be seen
 Features to old ideal grace allied,
 Amid their smiles and dimples dignified—
 Fit countenance for the soul of primal truth ;
 The bland composure of eternal youth !

What more changeful than the sea ?
 But over his great tides
 Fidelity presides ;
 And this light-hearted Maiden constant is as he.
 High is her aim as heaven above,
 And wide as ether her good-will ;
 And, like the lowly reed, her love
 Can drink its nurture from the scantiest rill :

Insight as keen as frosty star
 Is to *her* charity no bar,
 Nor interrupts her frolic graces
 When she is, far from these wild places,
 Encircled by familiar faces.

O the charm that manners draw,
 Nature, from thy genuine law !
 If from what her hand would do,
 Her voice would utter, aught ensue
 Untoward or unfit ;
 She, in benign affections pure,
 In self-forgetfulness secure,
 Sheds round the transient harm or vague mis-
 chance

A light unknown to tutored elegance :
 Her's is not a cheek shame-stricken,
 But her blushes are joy-flushes ;
 And the fault (if fault it be)
 Only ministers to quicken
 Laughter-loving gaiety,
 And kindle sportive wit—
 Leaving this Daughter of the mountains free
 As if she knew that Oberon king of Faery
 Had crossed her purpose with some quaint vagary,
 And heard his viewless bands
 Over their mirthful triumph clapping hands.

“ Last of the Three, though eldest born,
 Reveal thyself, like pensive Morn
 Touched by the skylark's earliest note,
 Ere humbler gladness be afloat.
 But whether in the semblance drest
 Of Dawn—or Eve, fair vision of the west,
 Come with each anxious hope subdued
 By woman's gentle fortitude,
 Each grief, through meekness, settling into rest.
 —Or I would hail thee when some high-wrought
 page

Of a closed volume lingering in thy hand
 Has raised thy spirit to a peaceful stand
 Among the glories of a happier age.”

Her brow hath opened on me—see it there,
 Brightening the umbrage of her hair ;
 So gleams the crescent moon, that loves
 To be descried through shady groves.
 Tenderest bloom is on her cheek ;
 Wish not for a richer streak ;
 Nor dread the depth of meditative eye ;
 But let thy love, upon that azure field
 Of thoughtfulness and beauty, yield
 Its homage offered up in purity.
 What would'st thou more ? In sunny glade,
 Or under leaves of thickest shade,

Was such a stillness e'er diffused
 Since earth grew calm while angels mused ?
 Softly she treads, as if her foot were loth
 To crush the mountain dew-drops—soon to melt
 On the flower's breast ; as if she felt
 That flowers themselves, whate'er their hue,
 With all their fragrance, all their glistening,
 Call to the heart for inward listening—
 And though for bridal wreaths and tokens true
 Welcomed wisely ; though a growth
 Which the careless shepherd sleeps on,
 As fitly spring from turf the mourner weeps on—
 And without wrong are cropped the marble tomb
 to strew.

The Charm is over ; the mute Phantoms gone,
 Nor will return—but droop not, favoured Youth ;
 The apparition that before thee shone
 Obeyed a summons covetous of truth.
 From these wild rocks thy footsteps I will guide
 To regions in which thy fortune may be tried,
 And one of the bright Three become thy happy
 Bride.

1828.

XLI.

THE WISHING-GATE.

In the vale of Grasmere, by the side of the old high-way leading to Ambleside, is a gate, which, time out of mind, has been called the *Wishing-gate*, from a belief that wishes formed or indulged there have a favourable issue.

HOPE rules a land for ever green :
 All powers that serve the bright-eyed Queen
 Are confident and gay ;
 Clouds at her bidding disappear ;
 Points she to aught ?—the bliss draws near,
 And Fancy smooths the way.

Not such the land of Wishes—there
 Dwell fruitless day-dreams, lawless prayer,
 And thoughts with things at strife ;
 Yet how forlorn, should *ye* depart
 Ye superstitions of the *heart*,
 How poor, were human life !

When magic lore abjured its might,
 Ye did not forfeit one dear right,
 One tender claim abate ;
 Witness this symbol of your sway,
 Surviving near the public way,
 The rustic *Wishing-gate* !

Inquire not if the faery race
 Shed kindly influence on the place,
 Ere northward they retired ;
 If here a warrior left a spell,
 Panting for glory as he fell ;
 Or here a saint expired.

Enough that all around is fair,
 Composed with Nature's finest care,
 And in her fondest love—
 Peace to embosom and content—
 To overawe the turbulent,
 The selfish to reprove.

Yea ! even the Stranger from afar,
 Reclining on this moss-grown bar,
 Unknowing, and unknown,
 The infection of the ground partakes,
 Longing for his Belov'd—who makes
 All happiness her own.

Then why should conscious Spirits fear
 The mystic stirrings that are here,
 The ancient faith disclaim ?
 The local Genius ne'er befriends
 Desires whose course in folly ends,
 Whose just reward is shame.

Smile if thou wilt, but not in scorn,
 If some, by ceaseless pains outworn,
 Here crave an easier lot ;
 If some have thirsted to renew
 A broken vow, or bind a true,
 With firmer, holier knot.

And not in vain, when thoughts are cast
 Upon the irrevocable past,
 Some Penitent sincere
 May for a worthier future sigh,
 While trickles from his downcast eye
 No unavailing tear.

The Worldling, pining to be freed
 From turmoil, who would turn or speed
 The current of his fate,
 Might stop before this favoured scene,
 At Nature's call, nor blush to lean
 Upon the *Wishing-gate*.

The Sage, who feels how blind, how weak
 Is man, though loth such help to *seek*,
 Yet, passing, here might pause,
 And thirst for insight to allay
 Misgiving, while the crimson day
 In quietness withdraws ;

Or when the church-clock's knell profound
To Time's first step across the bound
Of midnight makes reply ;
Time pressing on with starry crest,
To filial sleep upon the breast
Of dread eternity.

1828.

XLII.

THE WISHING-GATE DESTROYED.

'Tis gone—with old belief and dream
That round it clung, and tempting scheme
Released from fear and doubt ;
And the bright landscape too must lie,
By this blank wall, from every eye,
Relentlessly shut out.

Bear witness ye who seldom passed
That opening—but a look ye cast
Upon the lake below,
What spirit-stirring power it gained
From faith which here was entertained,
Though reason might say no.

Blest is that ground, where, o'er the springs
Of history, Glory claps her wings,
Fame sheds the exulting tear ;
Yet earth is wide, and many a nook
Unheard of is, like this, a book
For modest meanings dear.

It was in sooth a happy thought
That grafted, on so fair a spot,
So confident a token
Of coming good ;—the charm is fled ;
Indulgent centuries spun a thread,
Which one harsh day has broken.

Alas ! for him who gave the word ;
Could he no sympathy afford,
Derived from earth or heaven,
To hearts so oft by hope betrayed ;
Their very wishes wanted aid
Which here was freely given ?

Where, for the love-lorn maiden's wound,
Will now so readily be found
A balm of expectation ?
Anxious for far-off children, where
Shall mothers breathe a like sweet air
Of home-felt consolation ?

And not unfelt will prove the loss
'Mid trivial care and petty cross
And each day's shallow grief ;
Though the most easily beguiled
Were oft among the first that smiled
At their own fond belief.

If still the reckless change we mourn,
A reconciling thought may turn
To harm that might lurk here,
Ere judgment prompted from within
Fit aims, with courage to begin,
And strength to persevere.

Not Fortune's slave is Man : our state
Enjoins, while firm resolves await
On wishes just and wise,
That strenuous action follow both,
And life be one perpetual growth
Of heaven-ward enterprise.

So taught, so trained, we boldly face
All accidents of time and place ;
Whatever props may fail,
Trust in that sovereign law can spread
New glory o'er the mountain's head,
Fresh beauty through the vale.

That truth informing mind and heart,
The simplest cottager may part,
Ungrieved, with charm and spell ;
And yet, lost Wishing-gate, to thee
The voice of grateful memory
Shall bid a kind farewell !

See Note at the end of the Volume.

XLIII.

THE PRIMROSE OF THE ROCK.

A Rock there is whose homely front
The passing traveller slights ;
Yet there the glow-worms hang their lamps,
Like stars, at various heights ;
And one coy Primrose to that Rock
The vernal breeze invites.

What hideous warfare hath been waged,
What kingdoms overthrown,
Since first I spied that Primrose-tuft
And marked it for my own ;
A lasting link in Nature's chain
From highest heaven let down !

The flowers, still faithful to the stems,
 Their fellowship renew ;
 The stems are faithful to the root,
 That worketh out of view ;
 And to the rock the root adheres
 In every fibre true.

Close clings to earth the living rock,
 Though threatening still to fall ;
 The earth is constant to her sphere ;
 And God upholds them all :
 So blooms this lonely Plant, nor dreads
 Her annual funeral.

* * * * *

Here closed the meditative strain ;
 But air breathed soft that day,
 The hoary mountain-heights were cheered,
 The sunny vale looked gay ;
 And to the Primrose of the Rock
 I gave this after-lay.

I sang—Let myriads of bright flowers,
 Like Thee, in field and grove
 Revive unenvied ;—mightier far,
 Than tremblings that reprove
 Our vernal tendencies to hope,
 Is God's redeeming love ;

That love which changed—for wan disease,
 For sorrow that had bent
 O'er hopeless dust, for withered age—
 Their moral element,
 And turned the thistles of a curse
 To types beneficent.

Sin-blighted though we are, we too,
 The reasoning Sons of Men,
 From one oblivious winter called
 Shall rise, and breathe again ;
 And in eternal summer lose
 Our threescore years and ten.

To humbleness of heart descends
 This prescience from on high,
 The faith that elevates the just,
 Before and when they die ;
 And makes each soul a separate heaven,
 A court for Deity.

1831.

XLIV.

PRESENTIMENTS.

PRESENTIMENTS ! they judge not right
 Who deem that ye from open light
 Retire in fear of shame ;
 All *heaven-born* Instincts shun the touch
 Of vulgar sense,—and, being such,
 Such privilege ye claim.

The tear whose source I could not guess,
 The deep sigh that seemed fatherless,
 Were mine in early days ;
 And now, unforced by time to part
 With fancy, I obey my heart,
 And venture on your praise.

What though some busy foes to good,
 Too potent over nerve and blood,
 Lurk near you—and combine
 To taint the health which ye infuse ;
 This hides not from the moral Muse
 Your origin divine.

How oft from you, derided Powers !
 Comes Faith that in auspicious hours
 Builds castles, not of air :
 Bodings unsanctioned by the will
 Flow from your visionary skill,
 And teach us to beware.

The bosom-weight, your stubborn gift,
 That no philosophy can lift,
 Shall vanish, if ye please,
 Like morning mist : and, where it lay,
 The spirits at your bidding play
 In gaiety and ease.

Star-guided contemplations move
 Through space, though calm, not raised above
 Prognostics that ye rule ;
 The naked Indian of the wild,
 And haply, too, the cradled Child,
 Are pupils of your school.

But who can fathom your intents,
 Number their signs or instruments ?
 A rainbow, a sunbeam,
 A subtle smell that Spring unbinds,
 Dead pause abrupt of midnight winds,
 An echo, or a dream.

The laughter of the Christmas hearth
 With sighs of self-exhausted mirth
 Ye feelingly reprove ;
 And daily, in the conscious breast,
 Your visitations are a test
 And exercise of love.

When some great change gives boundless scope
 To an exulting Nation's hope,
 Oft, startled and made wise
 By your low-breathed interpretations,
 The simply-meek foretaste the springs
 Of bitter contraries.

Ye daunt the proud array of war,
 Pervade the lonely ocean far
 As sail hath been unfurled ;
 For dancers in the festive hall
 What ghastly partners hath your call
 Fetched from the shadowy world.

'Tis said, that warnings ye dispense,
 Emboldened by a keener sense ;
 That men have lived for whom,
 With dread precision, ye made clear
 The hour that in a distant year
 Should knell them to the tomb.

Unwelcome insight ! Yet there are
 Blest times when mystery is laid bare,
 Truth shows a glorious face,
 While on that isthmus which commands
 The councils of both worlds, she stands,
 Sage Spirits ! by your grace.

God, who instructs the brutes to scent
 All changes of the element,
 Whose wisdom fixed the scale
 Of natures, for our wants provides
 By higher, sometimes humbler, guides,
 When lights of reason fail.

1830.

XLV.

VERNAL ODE.

Rerum Natura tota est nusquam magis quam in minimis.

PLIN. NAT. HIST.

I.

BENEATH the concave of an April sky,
 When all the fields with freshest green were dight,
 Appeared, in presence of the spiritual eye
 That aids or supersedes our grosser sight,

The form and rich habiliments of One
 Whose countenance bore resemblance to the sun,
 When it reveals, in evening majesty,
 Features half lost amid their own pure light.
 Poised like a weary cloud, in middle air
 He hung,—then floated with angelic ease
 (Softening that bright effulgence by degrees)
 Till he had reached a summit sharp and bare,
 Where oft the venturous heifer drinks the noon-
 tide breeze.

Upon the apex of that lofty cone
 Alighted, there the Stranger stood alone ;
 Fair as a gorgeous Fabric of the east
 Suddenly raised by some enchanter's power,
 Where nothing was ; and firm as some old Tower
 Of Britain's realm, whose leafy crest
 Waves high, embellished by a gleaming shower !

II.

Beneath the shadow of his purple wings
 Rested a golden harp ;—he touched the strings ;
 And, after prelude of unearthly sound
 Poured through the echoing hills around,
 He sang—

“ No wintry desolations,
 Scorching blight or noxious dew,
 Affect my native habitations ;
 Buried in glory, far beyond the scope
 Of man's inquiring gaze, but to his hope
 Imaged, though faintly, in the hue
 Profound of night's ethereal blue ;
 And in the aspect of each radiant orb ;—
 Some fixed, some wandering with no timid curb ;
 But wandering star and fixed, to mortal eye,
 Blended in absolute serenity,
 And free from semblance of decline ;—
 Fresh as if Evening brought their natal hour,
 Her darkness splendour gave, her silence power,
 To testify of Love and Grace divine.

III.

What if those bright fires
 Shine subject to decay,
 Sons haply of extinguished sires,
 Themselves to lose their light, or pass away
 Like clouds before the wind,
 Be thanks poured out to Him whose hand bestows
 Nightly, on human kind
 That vision of endurance and repose.
 —And though to every draught of vital breath
 Renewed throughout the bounds of earth or ocean
 The melancholy gates of Death
 Respond with sympathetic motion ;

Though all that feeds on nether air,
 Howe'er magnificent or fair,
 Grows but to perish, and entrust
 Its ruins to their kindred dust ;
 Yet, by the Almighty's ever-during care,
 Her procreant vigils Nature keeps
 Amid the unfathomable deeps ;
 And saves the peopled fields of earth
 From dread of emptiness or dearth.
 Thus, in their stations, lifting tow'rd the sky
 The foliaged head in cloud-like majesty,
 The shadow-casting race of trees survive :
 Thus, in the train of Spring, arrive
 Sweet flowers ;—what living eye hath viewed
 Their myriads !—endlessly renewed,
 Wherever strikes the sun's glad ray ;
 Where'er the subtle waters stray ;
 Wherever sportive breezes bend
 Their course, or genial showers descend !
 Mortals, rejoice ! the very Angels quit
 Their mansions unsusceptible of change,
 Amid your pleasant bowers to sit,
 And through your sweet vicissitudes to range !"

IV.

O, nursed at happy distance from the cares
 Of a too-anxious world, mild pastoral Muse !
 That, to the sparkling crown Urania wears,
 And to her sister Clio's laurel wreath,
 Prefer'st a garland culled from purple heath,
 Or blooming thicket moist with morning dews ;
 Was such bright Spectacle vouchsafed to me ?
 And was it granted to the simple ear
 Of thy contented Votary
 Such melody to hear !
Him rather suits it, side by side with thee,
 Wrapped in a fit of pleasing indolence,
 While thy tired lute hangs on the hawthorn-tree,
 To lie and listen—till o'er-drows'd sense
 Sinks, hardly conscious of the influence—
 To the soft murmur of the vagrant Bee.
 —A slender note ! yet hoary Time
 Doth to the *Soul* exalt it with the chime
 Of all his years ;—a company
 Of ages coming, ages gone ;
 Nations from before them sweeping,
 Regions in destruction steeping,
 But every awful note in unison
 With that faint utterance, which tells
 Of treasure sucked from buds and bells,
 For the pure keeping of those waxen cells ;
 Where She—a statish prudent to confer
 Upon the common weal ; a warrior bold,
 Radiant all over with unburnished gold,

And armed with living spear for mortal fight ;
 A cunning forager
 That spreads no waste ; a social builder ; one
 In whom all busy offices unite
 With all fine functions that afford delight—
 Safe through the winter storm in quiet dwells !

V.

And is She brought within the power
 Of vision ?—o'er this tempting flower
 Hovering until the petals stay
 Her flight, and take its voice away !—
 Observe each wing !—a tiny van !
 The structure of her laden thigh,
 How fragile ! yet of ancestry
 Mysteriously remote and high ;
 High as the imperial front of man ;
 The roseate bloom on woman's cheek ;
 The soaring eagle's curv'd beak ;
 The white plumes of the floating swan ;
 Old as the tiger's paw, the lion's mane
 Ere shaken by that mood of stern disdain
 At which the desert trembles.—Humming Bee !
 Thy sting was needless then, perchance unknown,
 The seeds of malice were not sown ;
 All creatures met in peace, from fierceness free,
 And no pride blended with their dignity.
 —Tears had not broken from their source ;
 Nor Anguish strayed from her Tartarean den ;
 The golden years maintained a course
 Not undiversified though smooth and even ;
 We were not mocked with glimpse and shadow then,
 Bright Seraphs mixed familiarly with men ;
 And earth and stars composed a universal heaven !

1817.

XLVI.

DEVOTIONAL INCITEMENTS.

'Not to the earth confined,
 Ascend to heaven.'

WHERE will they stop, those breathing Powers,
 The Spirits of the new-born flowers ?
 They wander with the breeze, they wind
 Where'er the streams a passage find ;
 Up from their native ground they rise
 In mute aërial harmonies ;
 From humble violet—modest thyme—
 Exhaled, the essential odours climb,
 As if no space below the sky
 Their subtle flight could satisfy :
 Heaven will not tax our thoughts with pride
 If like ambition be *their* guide.

Roused by this kindest of May-showers,
 The spirit-quickener of the flowers,
 That with moist virtue softly cleaves
 The buds, and freshens the young leaves,
 The birds pour forth their souls in notes
 Of rapture from a thousand throats—
 Here checked by too impetuous haste,
 While there the music runs to waste,
 With bounty more and more enlarged,
 Till the whole air is overcharged ;
 Give ear, O Man ! to their appeal
 And thirst for no inferior zeal,
 Thou, who canst *think*, as well as feel.

Mount from the earth ; aspire ! aspire !
 So pleads the town's cathedral quire,
 In strains that from their solemn height
 Sink, to attain a loftier flight ;
 While incense from the altar breathes
 Rich fragrance in embodied wreaths ;
 Or, flung from swinging censer, shrouds
 The taper-lights, and curls in clouds
 Around angelic Forms, the still
 Creation of the painter's skill,
 That on the service wait concealed
 One moment, and the next revealed
 —Cast off your bonds, awake, arise,
 And for no transient ecstasies !
 What else can mean the visual plea
 Of still or moving imagery—
 The iterated summons loud,
 Not wasted on the attendant crowd,
 Nor wholly lost upon the throng
 Hurrying the busy streets along ?

Alas ! the sanctities combined
 By art to unsensualise the mind,
 Decay and languish ; or, as creeds
 And humours change, are spurned like weeds :
 The priests are from their altars thrust ;
 Temples are levelled with the dust ;
 And solemn rites and awful forms
 Founder amid fanatic storms.
 Yet evermore, through years renewed
 In undisturbed vicissitude
 Of seasons balancing their flight
 On the swift wings of day and night,
 Kind Nature keeps a heavenly door
 Wide open for the scattered Poor.
 Where flower-breathed incense to the skies
 Is wafted in mute harmonies ;
 And ground fresh-cloven by the plough
 Is fragrant with a humbler vow ;

Where birds and brooks from leafy dells
 Chime forth unwearied canticles,
 And vapours magnify and spread
 The glory of the sun's bright head—
 Still constant in her worship, still
 Conforming to the eternal Will,
 Whether men sow or reap the fields,
 Divine monition Nature yields,
 That not by bread alone we live,
 Or what a hand of flesh can give ;
 That every day should leave some part
 Free for a sabbath of the heart :
 So shall the seventh be truly blest,
 From morn to eve, with hallowed rest.

1832.

XLVII.

THE CUCKOO-CLOCK.

WOULDEST thou be taught, when sleep has taken
 flight,
 By a sure voice that can most sweetly tell,
 How far-off yet a glimpse of morning light,
 And if to lure the truant back be well,
 Forbear to covet a Repeater's stroke,
 That, answering to thy touch, will sound the hour ;
 Better provide thee with a Cuckoo-clock
 For service hung behind thy chamber-door ;
 And in due time the soft spontaneous shock,
 The double note, as if with living power,
 Will to composure lead—or make thee blithe as
 bird in bower.

List, Cuckoo—Cuckoo !—oft tho' tempests howl,
 Or nipping frost remind thee trees are bare,
 How cattle pine, and droop the shivering fowl,
 Thy spirits will seem to feed on balmy air :
 I speak with knowledge,—by that Voice beguiled,
 Thou wilt salute old memories as they throng
 Into thy heart ; and fancies, running wild
 Through fresh green fields, and budding groves
 among,
 Will make thee happy, happy as a child ;
 Of sunshine wilt thou think, and flowers, and song,
 And breathe as in a world where nothing can go
 wrong.

And know—that, even for him who shuns the day
 And nightly tosses on a bed of pain ;
 Whose joys, from all but memory swept away,
 Must come un hoped for, if they come again ;

Know—that, for him whose waking thoughts, severe
As his distress is sharp, would scorn my theme,
The mimic notes, striking upon his ear
In sleep, and intermingling with his dream,
Could from sad regions send him to a dear
Delightful land of verdure, shower and gleam,
To mock the *wandering* Voice beside some haunted
stream.

O bounty without measure ! while the grace
Of Heaven doth in such wise, from humblest
springs,

Pour pleasure forth, and solaces that trace
A mazy course along familiar things,
Well may our hearts have faith that blessings come,
Streaming from founts above the starry sky,
With angels when their own untroubled home
They leave, and speed on nightly embassy
To visit earthly chambers,—and for whom ?
Yea, both for souls who God's forbearance try,
And those that seek his help, and for his mercy sigh.

XLVIII.

TO THE CLOUDS.

ARMY of Clouds ! ye wingèd Host in troops
Ascending from behind the motionless brow
Of that tall rock, as from a hidden world,
Whither with such eagerness of speed ?
What seek ye, or what shun ye ? of the gale
Companions, fear ye to be left behind,
Or racing o'er your blue ethereal field
Content ye with each other ? of the sea
Children, thus post ye over vale and height
To sink upon your mother's lap—and rest ?
Or were ye rightlier hailed, when first mine eyes
Beheld in your impetuous march the likeness
Of a wide army pressing on to meet
Or overtake some unknown enemy ?—
But your smooth motions suit a peaceful aim ;
And Fancy, not less aptly pleased, compares
Your squadrons to an endless flight of birds
Erial, upon due migration bound
To milder climes ; or rather do ye urge
A caravan your hasty pilgrimage
To pause at last on more aspiring heights
Than these, and utter your devotion there
With thunderous voice ? Or are ye jubilant,
And would ye, tracking your proud lord the Sun,
Be present at his setting ; or the pomp
Of Persian mornings would ye fill, and stand

Poising your splendours high above the heads
Of worshippers kneeling to their up-risen God ?
Whence, whence, ye Clouds ! this eagerness of
speed ?

Speak, silent creatures.—They are gone, are fled,
Buried together in yon gloomy mass
That loads the middle heaven ; and clear and bright
And vacant doth the region which they thronged
Appear ; a calm descent of sky conducting
Down to the unapproachable abyss,
Down to that hidden gulf from which they rose
To vanish—fleet as days and months and years,
Fleet as the generations of mankind,
Power, glory, empire, as the world itself,
The lingering world, when time hath ceased to be.
But the winds roar, shaking the rooted trees,
And see ! a bright precursor to a train
Perchance as numerous, overpeers the rock
That sullenly refuses to partake
Of the wild impulse. From a fount of life
Invisible, the long procession moves
Luminous or gloomy, welcome to the vale
Which they are entering, welcome to mine eye
That sees them, to my soul that owns in them,
And in the bosom of the firmament
O'er which they move, wherein they are contained,
A type of her capacious self and all
Her restless progeny.

A humble walk

Here is my body doomed to tread, this path,
A little hoary line and faintly traced,
Work, shall we call it, of the shepherd's foot
Or of his flock !—joint vestige of them both.
I pace it unrepining, for my thoughts
Admit no bondage and my words have wings.
Where is the Orphean lyre, or Druid harp,
To accompany the verse ? The mountain blast
Shall be our *hand* of music ; he shall sweep
The rocks, and quivering trees, and billowy lake,
And search the fibres of the caves, and they
Shall answer, for our song is of the Clouds
And the wind loves them ; and the gentle gales—
Which by their aid re-clothe the naked lawn
With annual verdure, and revive the woods,
And moisten the parched lips of thirsty flowers—
Love them ; and every idle breeze of air
Bends to the favourite burthen. Moon and stars
Keep their most solemn vigils when the Clouds
Watch also, shifting peaceably their place
Like bands of ministering Spirits, or when they lie,
As if some Protean art the change had wrought,
In listless quiet o'er the ethereal deep
Scattered, a Cyclades of various shapes
And all degrees of beauty. O ye Lightnings !

Ye are their perilous offspring ; and the Sun—
 Source inexhaustible of life and joy,
 And type of man's far-darting reason, therefore
 In old time worshipped as the god of verse,
 A blazing intellectual deity—
 Loves his own glory in their looks, and showers
 Upon that unsubstantial brotherhood
 Visions with all but beatific light
 Enriched—too transient were they not renewed
 From age to age, and did not, while we gaze
 In silent rapture, credulous desire
 Nourish the hope that memory lacks not power
 To keep the treasure unimpaired. Vain thought!
 Yet why repine, created as we are
 For joy and rest, albeit to find them only
 Lodged in the bosom of eternal things?

 XLIX.

 SUGGESTED BY A PICTURE OF THE BIRD
 OF PARADISE.

THE gentlest Poet, with free thoughts endowed,
 And a true master of the glowing strain,
 Might scan the narrow province with disdain
 That to the Painter's skill is here allowed.
 This, this the Bird of Paradise! disclaim
 The daring thought, forget the name;
 This the Sun's Bird, whom Glendoveers might
 own

As no unworthy Partner in their flight
 Through seas of ether, where the ruffling sway
 Of nether air's rude billows is unknown;
 Whom Sylphs, if e'er for casual pastime they
 Through India's spicy regions wing their way,
 Might bow to as their Lord. What character,
 O sovereign Nature! I appeal to thee,
 Of all thy feathered progeny
 Is so unearthly, and what shape so fair?
 So richly decked in variegated down,
 Green, sable, shining yellow, shadowy brown,
 Tints softly with each other blended,
 Hues doubtfully begun and ended;
 Or intershooting, and to sight
 Lost and recovered, as the rays of light
 Glance on the conscious plumes touched here and
 there?

Full surely, when with such proud gifts of life
 Began the pencil's strife,
 O'erweening Art was caught as in a snare.

A sense of seemingly presumptuous wrong
 Gave the first impulse to the Poet's song;
 But, of his scorn repenting soon, he drew
 A juster judgment from a calmer view;
 And, with a spirit freed from discontent,
 Thankfully took an effort that was meant
 Not with God's bounty, Nature's love, to vie,
 Or made with hope to please that inward eye
 Which ever strives in vain itself to satisfy,
 But to recal the truth by some faint trace
 Of power ethereal and celestial grace,
 That in the living Creature find on earth a place.

 L.

A JEWISH FAMILY.

(IN A SMALL VALLEY OPPOSITE ST. GOAR, UPON THE RHINE.

GENIUS of Raphael! if thy wings
 Might bear thee to this glen,
 With faithful memory left of things
 To pencil dear and pen,
 Thou would'st forego the neighbouring Rhine,
 And all his majesty—
 A studious forehead to incline
 O'er this poor family.

The Mother—her thou must have seen,
 In spirit, ere she came
 To dwell these rifted rocks between,
 Or found on earth a name;
 An image, too, of that sweet Boy,
 Thy inspirations give—
 Of playfulness, and love, and joy,
 Predestined here to live.

Downcast, or shooting glances far,
 How beautiful his eyes,
 That blend the nature of the star
 With that of summer skies!
 I speak as if of sense beguiled;
 Uncounted months are gone,
 Yet am I with the Jewish Child,
 That exquisite Saint John.

I see the dark-brown curls, the brow,
 The smooth transparent skin,
 Refined, as with intent to show
 The holiness within;

The grace of parting Infancy
By blushes yet untamed ;
Age faithful to the mother's knee,
Nor of her arms ashamed.

Two lovely Sisters, still and sweet
As flowers, stand side by side ;
Their soul-subduing looks might cheat
The Christian of his pride :
Such beauty hath the Eternal poured
Upon them not forlorn,
Though of a lineage once abhorred,
Nor yet redeemed from scorn.

Mysterious safeguard, that, in spite
Of poverty and wrong,
Doth here preserve a living light,
From Hebrew fountains sprung ;
That gives this ragged group to cast
Around the dell a gleam
Of Palestine, of glory past,
And proud Jerusalem !

1820.

II.

ON THE POWER OF SOUND.

ARGUMENT.

The Ear addressed, as occupied by a spiritual functionary, in communion with sounds, individual, or combined in studied harmony.—Sources and effects of those sounds (to the close of 6th Stanza).—The power of music, whence proceeding, exemplified in the idiot.—Origin of music, and its effect in early ages—how produced (to the middle of 10th Stanza).—The mind recalled to sounds acting casually and severally.—Wish uttered (11th Stanza) that these could be united into a scheme or system for moral interests and intellectual contemplation.—(Stanza 12th). The Pythagorean theory of numbers and music, with their supposed power over the motions of the universe—imagination consonant with such a theory.—Wish expressed (in 11th Stanza) realised, in some degree, by the representation of all sounds under the form of thanksgiving to the Creator.—(Last Stanza) the destruction of earth and the planetary system—the survival of audible harmony, and its support in the Divine Nature, as revealed in Holy Writ.

I.

Thy functions are ethereal,
As if within thee dwelt a glancing mind,
Organ of vision ! And a Spirit ærial
Informs the cell of Hearing, dark and blind ;
Intricate labyrinth, more dread for thought
To enter than oracular cave ;

Strict passage, through which sighs are brought,
And whispers for the heart, their slave ;
And shrieks, that revel in abuse
Of shivering flesh ; and warbled air,
Whose piercing sweetness can unloose
The chains of frenzy, or entice a smile
Into the ambush of despair ;
Hosannas pealing down the long-drawn aisle,
And requiems answered by the pulse that beats
Devoutly, in life's last retreats !

II.

The headlong streams and fountains
Serve Thee, invisible Spirit, with untired powers ;
Cheering the wakeful tent on Syrian mountains,
They lull perchance ten thousand thousand flowers.
That roar, the prowling lion's *Here I am*,
How fearful to the desert wide !
That bleat, how tender ! of the dam
Calling a straggler to her side.
Shout, cuckoo !—let the vernal soul
Go with thee to the frozen zone ;
Toll from thy loftiest perch, lone bell-bird, toll !
At the still hour to Mercy dear,
Mercy from her twilight throne
Listening to nun's faint throb of holy fear,
To sailor's prayer breathed from a darkening sea,
Or widow's cottage-lullaby.

III.

Ye Voices, and ye Shadows
And Images of voice—to hound and horn
From rocky steep and rock-bestudded meadows
Flung back, and, in the sky's blue caves, reborn—
On with your pastime ! till the church-tower bells
A greeting give of measured glee ;
And milder echoes from their cells
Repeat the bridal symphony.
Then, or far earlier, let us rove
Where mists are breaking up or gone,
And from aloft look down into a cove
Besprinkled with a careless quire,
Happy milk-maids, one by one
Scattering a ditty each to her desire,
A liquid concert matchless by nice Art,
A stream as if from one full heart.

IV.

Blest be the song that brightens
The blind man's gloom, exalts the veteran's mirth ;
Unscorned the peasant's whistling breath, that
lightens
His duteous toil of furrowing the green earth.

For the tired slave, Song lifts the languid oar,
And bids it aptly fall, with chime
That beautifies the fairest shore,
And mitigates the harshest clime.
Yon pilgrims see—in lagging file
They move; but soon the appointed way
A choral *Ave Marie* shall beguile,
And to their hope the distant shrine
Glisten with a livelier ray:
Nor friendless he, the prisoner of the mine,
Who from the well-spring of his own clear breast
Can draw, and sing his griefs to rest.

V.

When civic renovation
Dawns on a kingdom, and for needful haste
Best eloquence avails not, Inspiration
Mounts with a tune, that travels like a blast
Piping through cave and battlemented tower;
Then starts the sluggard, pleased to meet
That voice of Freedom, in its power
Of promises, shrill, wild, and sweet!
Who, from a martial *pageant*, spreads
Incitements of a battle-day,
Thrilling the unweaponed crowd with plumeless
heads!—

Even She whose Lydian airs inspire
Peaceful striving, gentle play
Of timid hope and innocent desire
Shot from the dancing Graces, as they move
Fanned by the plausible wings of Love.

VI.

How oft along thy mazes,
Regent of sound, have dangerous Passions trod!
O Thou, through whom the temple rings with praises,
And blackening clouds in thunder speak of God,
Betray not by the cozenage of sense
Thy votaries, woefully resigned
To a voluptuous influence
That taints the purer, better, mind;
But lead sick Fancy to a harp
That hath in noble tasks been tried;
And, if the virtuous feel a pang too sharp,
Soothe it into patience,—stay
The uplifted arm of Suicide;
And let some mood of thine in firm array
Knit every thought the impending issue needs,
Ere martyr burns, or patriot bleeds!

VII.

As Conscience, to the centre
Of being, smites with irresistible pain
So shall a solemn cadence, if it enter
The mouldy vaults of the dull idiot's brain,

Transmute him to a wretch from quiet hurled—
Convulsed as by a jarring din;
And then aghast, as at the world
Of reason partially let in
By concords winding with a sway
Terrible for sense and soul!
Or, awed he weeps, struggling to quell dismay.
Point not these mysteries to an Art
Lodged above the starry pole;
Pure modulations flowing from the heart
Of divine Love, where Wisdom, Beauty, Truth
With Order dwell, in endless youth!

VIII.

Oblivion may not cover
All treasures hoarded by the miser, Time.
Orphean Insight! truth's undaunted lover,
To the first leagues of tutored passion climb,
When Music deigned within this grosser sphere
Her subtle essence to enfold,
And voice and shell drew forth a tear
Softer than Nature's self could mould.
Yet *strenuous* was the infant Age:
Art, daring because souls could feel,
Stirred nowhere but an urgent equipage
Of rapt imagination sped her march
Through the realms of woe and weal:
Hell to the lyre bowed low; the upper arch
Rejoiced that clamorous spell and magic verse
Her wan disasters could disperse.

IX.

The Gift to king Amphion
That walled a city with its melody
Was for belief no dream:—thy skill, Arion!
Could humanise the creatures of the sea,
Where men were monsters. A last grace he craves,
Leave for one chant;—the dulcet sound
Steals from the deck o'er willing waves,
And listening dolphins gather round.
Self-cast, as with a desperate course,
Mid that strange audience, he bestrides
A proud One docile as a managed horse;
And singing, while the accordant hand
Sweeps his harp, the Master rides;
So shall he touch at length a friendly strand,
And he, with his preserver, shine star-bright
In memory, through silent night.

X.

The pipe of Pan, to shepherds
Couched in the shadow of Mænalian pines,
Was passing sweet; the eyeballs of the leopards,
That in high triumph drew the Lord of vines,

How did they sparkle to the cymbal's clang !
 While Fauns and Satyrs beat the ground
 In cadence,—and Silenus swang
 This way and that, with wild-flowers crowned.
 To life, to *life* give back thine ear :
 Ye who are longing to be rid
 Of fable, though to truth subservient, hear
 The little sprinkling of cold earth that fell
 Echoed from the coffin-lid ;
 The convict's summons in the steeple's knell ;
 'The vain distress-gun,' from a leeward shore,
 Repeated—heard, and heard no more !

XI.

For terror, joy, or pity,
 Vast is the compass and the swell of notes :
 From the babe's first cry to voice of regal city,
 Rolling a solemn sea-like bass, that floats
 Far as the woodlands—with the trill to blend
 Of that shy songstress, whose love-tale
 Might tempt an angel to descend,
 While hovering o'er the moonlight vale.
 Ye wandering Utterances, has earth no scheme,
 No scale of moral music—to unite
 Powers that survive but in the faintest dream
 Of memory ?—that ye might stoop to bear
 Chains, such precious chains of sight
 As laboured minstrelsies through ages wear !
 O for a balance fit the truth to tell
 Of the Unsubstantial, pondered well !

XII.

By one pervading spirit
 Of tones and numbers all things are controlled,
 As sages taught, where faith was found to merit
 Initiation in that mystery old.
 The heavens, whose aspect makes our minds as still
 As they themselves appear to be,
 Innumerable voices fill
 With everlasting harmony ;
 The towering headlands, crowned with mist,
 Their feet among the billows, know

That Ocean is a mighty harmonist ;
 Thy pinions, universal Air,
 Ever waving to and fro,
 Are delegates of harmony, and bear
 Strains that support the Seasons in their round ;
 Stern Winter loves a dirge-like sound.

XIII.

Break forth into thanksgiving,
 Ye banded instruments of wind and chords ;
 Unite, to magnify the Ever-living,
 Your inarticulate notes with the voice of words !
 Nor hushed be service from the lowing mead,
 Nor mute the forest hum of noon ;
 Thou too be heard, lone eagle ! freed
 From snowy peak and cloud, attune
 Thy hungry barkings to the hymn
 Of joy, that from her utmost walls
 The six-days' Work, by flaming Seraphim
 Transmits to Heaven ! As Deep to Deep
 Shouting through one valley calls,
 All worlds, all natures, mood and measure keep
 For praise and ceaseless gratulation, poured
 Into the ear of God, their Lord !

XIV.

A Voice to Light gave Being ;
 To Time, and Man his earth-born chronicler ;
 A Voice shall finish doubt and dim foreseeing,
 And sweep away life's visionary stir ;
 The trumpet (we, intoxicate with pride,
 Arm at its blast for deadly wars)
 To archangelic lips applied,
 The grave shall open, quench the stars.
 O Silence ! are Man's noisy years
 No more than moments of thy life ?
 Is Harmony, blest queen of smiles and tears,
 With her smooth tones and discords just,
 Tempered into rapturous strife,
 Thy destined bond-slave ? No ! though earth be dust
 And vanish, though the heavens dissolve, her stay
 Is in the Word, that shall not pass away.

PETER BELL.

A TALE.

What's in a Name?

Brutus will start a Spirit as soon as Cæsar!

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ., P.L., ETC. ETC.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

The Tale of Peter Bell, which I now introduce to your notice, and to that of the Public, has, in its Manuscript state, nearly survived its *minority*:—for it first saw the light in the summer of 1798. During this long interval, pains have been taken at different times to make the production less unworthy of a favourable reception; or, rather, to fit it for filling *permanently* a station, however humble, in the Literature of our Country. This has, indeed, been the aim of all my endeavours in Poetry, which, you know, have been sufficiently laborious to prove that I deem the Art not lightly to be approached; and that the attainment of excellence in it, may laudably be made the principal object of intellectual pursuit by any man, who, with reasonable consideration of circumstances, has faith in his own impulses.

The Poem of Peter Bell, as the Prologue will show, was composed under a belief that the Imagination not only does not require for its exercise the intervention of supernatural agency, but that, though such agency be excluded, the faculty may be called forth as imperiously and for kindred results of pleasure, by incidents, within the compass of poetic probability, in the humblest departments of daily life. Since that Prologue was written, *you* have exhibited most splendid effects of judicious daring, in the opposite and usual course. Let this acknowledgment make my peace with the lovers of the supernatural; and I am persuaded it will be admitted, that to you, as a Master in that province of the art, the following Tale, whether from contrast or congruity, is not an inappropriate offering. Accept it, then, as a public testimony of affectionate admiration from one with whose name yours has been often *coupled* (to use your own words) for evil and for good; and believe me to be, with earnest wishes that life and health may be granted you to complete the many important works in which you are engaged, and with high respect,

Most faithfully yours,

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

RYDAL MOUNT, April 7, 1819.

PROLOGUE.

THERE's something in a flying horse,
There's something in a huge balloon;
But through the clouds I'll never float
Until I have a little Boat,
Shaped like the crescent-moon.

And now I *have* a little Boat,
In shape a very crescent-moon:
Fast through the clouds my boat can sail;
But if perchance your faith should fail,
Look up—and you shall see me soon!

The woods, my Friends, are round you roaring,
Rocking and roaring like a sea;
The noise of danger's in your ears,
And ye have all a thousand fears
Both for my little Boat and me!

Meanwhile untroubled I admire
The pointed horns of my canoe;
And, did not pity touch my breast,
To see how ye are all distressed,
Till my ribs ached, I'd laugh at you!

Away we go, my Boat and I—
Frail man ne'er sate in such another;
Whether among the winds we strive,
Or deep into the clouds we dive,
Each is contented with the other.

Away we go—and what care we
For treasons, tumults, and for wars?
We are as calm in our delight
As is the crescent-moon so bright
Among the scattered stars.

Up goes my Boat among the stars
Through many a breathless field of light,
Through many a long blue field of ether,
Leaving ten thousand stars beneath her:
Up goes my little Boat so bright!

The Crab, the Scorpion, and the Bull—
We pry among them all; have shot
High o'er the red-haired race of Mars,
Covered from top to toe with scars;
Such company I like it not!

The towns in Saturn are decayed,
And melancholy Spectres throng them ;—
The Pleiads, that appear to kiss
Each other in the vast abyss,
With joy I sail among them.

Swift Mercury resounds with mirth,
Great Jove is full of stately bowers ;
But these, and all that they contain,
What are they to that tiny grain,
That little Earth of ours ?

Then back to Earth, the dear green Earth :—
Whole ages if I here should roam,
The world for my remarks and me
Would not a whit the better be ;
I 've left my heart at home.

See ! there she is, the matchless Earth !
There spreads the famed Pacific Ocean !
Old Andes thrusts yon craggy spear
Through the grey clouds ; the Alps are here,
Like waters in commotion !

Yon tawny slip is Libya's sands ;
That silver thread the river Dnieper ;
And look, where clothed in brightest green
Is a sweet Isle, of isles the Queen ;
Ye fairies, from all evil keep her !

And see the town where I was born !
Around those happy fields we span
In boyish gambols ;—I was lost
Where I have been, but on this coast
I feel I am a man.

Never did fifty things at once
Appear so lovely, never, never ;—
How tunelessly the forests ring !
To hear the earth's soft murmuring
Thus could I hang for ever !

"Shame on you !" cried my little Boat,
"Was ever such a homesick Loon,
Within a living Boat to sit,
And make no better use of it ;
A Boat twin-sister of the crescent-moon !

Ne'er in the breast of full-grown Poet
Fluttered so faint a heart before ;—
Was it the music of the spheres
That overpowered your mortal ears ?
—Such din shall trouble them no more.

These nether precincts do not lack
Charms of their own ;—then come with me ;
I want a comrade, and for you
There's nothing that I would not do ;
Nought is there that you shall not see.

Haste ! and above Siberian snows
We 'll sport amid the boreal morning ;
Will mingle with her lustrous gliding
Among the stars, the stars now hiding,
And now the stars adorning.

I know the secrets of a land
Where human foot did never stray ;
Fair is that land as evening skies,
And cool, though in the depth it lies
Of burning Africa.

Or we 'll into the realm of Faery,
Among the lovely shades of things ;
The shadowy forms of mountains bare,
And streams, and bowers, and ladies fair,
The shades of palaces and kings !

Or, if you thirst with hardy zeal
Less quiet regions to explore,
Prompt voyage shall to you reveal
How earth and heaven are taught to feel
The might of magic lore !"

"My little vagrant Form of light,
My gay and beautiful Canoe,
Well have you played your friendly part ;
As kindly take what from my heart
Experience forces—then adieu !

Temptation lurks among your words ;
But, while these pleasures you're pursuing
Without impediment or let,
No wonder if you quite forget
What on the earth is doing.

There was a time when all mankind
Did listen with a faith sincere
To tuneful tongues in mystery versed ;
Then Poets fearlessly rehearsed
The wonders of a wild career.

Go—(but the world's a sleepy world,
And 'tis, I fear, an age too late)
Take with you some ambitious Youth !
For, restless Wanderer ! I, in truth,
Am all unfit to be your mate.

Long have I loved what I behold,
The night that calms, the day that cheers ;
The common growth of mother-earth
Suffices me—her tears, her mirth,
Her humblest mirth and tears.

The dragon's wing, the magic ring,
I shall not covet for my dower,
If I along that lowly way
With sympathetic heart may stray,
And with a soul of power.

These given, what more need I desire
To stir, to soothe, or elevate ?
What nobler marvels than the mind
May in life's daily prospect find,
May find or there create ?

A potent wand doth Sorrow wield ;
What spell so strong as guilty Fear !
Repentance is a tender Sprite ;
If aught on earth have heavenly might,
'Tis lodged within her silent tear.

But grant my wishes,—let us now
Descend from this ethereal height ;
Then take thy way, adventurous Skiff,
More daring far than Hippogriff,
And be thy own delight !

To the stone-table in my garden,
Loved haunt of many a summer hour,
The Squire is come : his daughter Bess
Beside him in the cool recess
Sits blooming like a flower.

With these are many more convened ;
They know not I have been so far ;—
I see them there, in number nine,
Beneath the spreading Weymouth-pine !
I see them—there they are !

There sits the Vicar and his Dame ;
And there my good friend, Stephen Otter ;
And, ere the light of evening fail,
To them I must relate the Tale
Of Peter Bell the Potter.*

Off flew the Boat—away she flees,
Spurning her freight with indignation !
And I, as well as I was able,
On two poor legs, toward my stone-table
Limped on with sore vexation.

"O, here he is !" cried little Bess—
She saw me at the garden-door ;
"We've waited anxiously and long,"
They cried, and all around me throng,
Full nine of them or more !

"Reproach me not—your fears be still—
Be thankful we again have met ;—
Resume, my Friends ! within the shade
Your seats, and quickly shall be paid
The well-remembered debt."

I spake with faltering voice, like one
Not wholly rescued from the pale
Of a wild dream, or worse illusion ;
But, straight, to cover my confusion,
Began the promised Tale.

PART FIRST.

ALL by the moonlight river side
Groaned the poor Beast—alas ! in vain ;
The staff was raised to loftier height,
And the blows fell with heavier weight
As Peter struck—and struck again.

"Hold !" cried the Squire, "against the rules
Of common sense you're surely sinning ;
This leap is for us all too bold ;
Who Peter was, let that be told,
And start from the beginning."

—"A Potter*, Sir, he was by trade,"
Said I, becoming quite collected ;
"And wheresoever he appeared,
Full twenty times was Peter feared
For once that Peter was respected.

He, two-and-thirty years or more,
Had been a wild and woodland rover ;
Had heard the Atlantic surges roar
On farthest Cornwall's rocky shore,
And trod the cliffs of Dover.

And he had seen Caernarvon's towers,
And well he knew the spire of Sarum ;
And he had been where Lincoln bell
Flings o'er the fen that ponderous knell—
A far-renowned alarum !

* In the dialect of the North, a hawk of earthenware is thus designated.

At Doncaster, at York, and Leeds,
And merry Carlisle had he been ;
And all along the Lowlands fair,
All through the bonny shire of Ayr;
And far as Aberdeen.

And he had been at Inverness ;
And Peter, by the mountain-rills,
Had danced his round with Highland lasses ;
And he had lain beside his asses
On lofty Cheviot Hills :

And he had trudged through Yorkshire dales,
Among the rocks and winding *scars* ;
Where deep and low the hamlets lie
Beneath their little patch of sky
And little lot of stars :

And all along the indented coast,
Bespattered with the salt-sea foam ;
Where'er a knot of houses lay
On headland, or in hollow bay ;—
Sure never man like him did roam !

As well might Peter, in the Fleet,
Have been fast bound, a begging debtor ;—
He travelled here, he travelled there ;—
But not the value of a hair
Was heart or head the better.

He roved among the vales and streams,
In the green wood and hollow dell ;
They were his dwellings night and day,—
But nature ne'er could find the way
Into the heart of Peter Bell.

In vain, through every changeful year,
Did Nature lead him as before ;
A primrose by a river's brim
A yellow primrose was to him,
And it was nothing more.

Small change it made in Peter's heart
To see his gentle panniered train
With more than vernal pleasure feeding,
Where'er the tender grass was leading
Its earliest green along the lane.

In vain, through water, earth, and air,
The soul of happy sound was spread,
When Peter on some April morn,
Beneath the broom or budding thorn,
Made the warm earth his lazy bed.

At noon, when, by the forest's edge
He lay beneath the branches high,
The soft blue sky did never melt
Into his heart ; he never felt
The witchery of the soft blue sky !

On a fair prospect some have looked
And felt, as I have heard them say,
As if the moving time had been
A thing as steadfast as the scene
On which they gazed themselves away.

Within the breast of Peter Bell
These silent raptures found no place ;
He was a Carl as wild and rude
As ever hue-and-cry pursued,
As ever ran a felon's race.

Of all that lead a lawless life,
Of all that love their lawless lives,
In city or in village small,
He was the wildest far of all ;—
He had a dozen wedded wives.

Nay, start not !—wedded wives—and twelve !
But how one wife could e'er come near him,
In simple truth I cannot tell ;
For, be it said of Peter Bell,
To see him was to fear him.

Though Nature could not touch his heart
By lovely forms, and silent weather,
And tender sounds, yet you might see
At once, that Peter Bell and she
Had often been together.

A savage wildness round him hung
As of a dweller out of doors ;
In his whole figure and his mien
A savage character was seen
Of mountains and of dreary moors.

To all the unshaped half-human thoughts
Which solitary Nature feeds
'Mid summer storms or winter's ice,
Had Peter joined whatever vice
The cruel city breeds.

His face was keen as is the wind
That cuts along the hawthorn-fence ;
Of courage you saw little there,
But, in its stead, a medley air
Of cunning and of impudence.

He had a dark and sidelong walk,
And long and slouching was his gait ;
Beneath his looks so bare and bold,
You might perceive, his spirit cold
Was playing with some inward bait.

His forehead wrinkled was and furred ;
A work, one half of which was done
By thinking of his ' *whens* ' and ' *hows* ; '
And half, by knitting of his brows
Beneath the glaring sun.

There was a hardness in his cheek,
There was a hardness in his eye,
As if the man had fixed his face,
In many a solitary place,
Against the wind and open sky ! "

ONE NIGHT, (and now my little Bess !
We've reached at last the promised Tale ;)
One beautiful November night,
When the full moon was shining bright
Upon the rapid river Swale,

Along the river's winding banks
Peter was travelling all alone ;—
Whether to buy or sell, or led
By pleasure running in his head,
To me was never known.

He trudged along through copse and brake,
He trudged along o'er hill and dale ;
Nor for the moon cared he a tittle,
And for the stars he cared as little,
And for the murmuring river Swale.

But, chancing to espy a path
That promised to cut short the way ;
As many a wiser man hath done,
He left a trusty guide for one
That might his steps betray.

To a thick wood he soon is brought
Where cheerily his course he weaves,
And whistling loud may yet be heard,
Though often buried, like a bird
Darkling, among the boughs and leaves.

But quickly Peter's mood is changed,
And on he drives with cheeks that burn
In downright fury and in wrath ;—
There 's little sign the treacherous path
Will to the road return !

The path grows dim, and dimmer still ;
Now up, now down, the Rover wends,
With all the sail that he can carry,
Till brought to a deserted quarry—
And there the pathway ends.

He paused—for shadows of strange shape,
Massy and black, before him lay ;
But through the dark, and through the cold,
And through the yawning fissures old,
Did Peter boldly press his way

Right through the quarry ;—and behold
A scene of soft and lovely hue !
Where blue and grey, and tender green,
Together make as sweet a scene
As ever human eye did view.

Beneath the clear blue sky he saw
A little field of meadow ground ;
But field or meadow name it not ;
Call it of earth a small green plot,
With rocks encompassed round.

The Swale flowed under the grey rocks,
But he flowed quiet and unseen ;—
You need a strong and stormy gale
To bring the noises of the Swale
To that green spot, so calm and green !

And is there no one dwelling here,
No hermit with his beads and glass ?
And does no little cottage look
Upon this soft and fertile nook ?
Does no one live near this green grass ?

Across the deep and quiet spot
Is Peter driving through the grass—
And now has reached the skirting trees ;
When, turning round his head, he sees
A solitary Ass.

" A prize ! " cries Peter—but he first
Must spy about him far and near :
There 's not a single house in sight,
No woodman's hut, no cottage light—
Peter, you need not fear !

There 's nothing to be seen but woods,
And rocks that spread a hoary gleam,
And this one Beast, that from the bed
Of the green meadow hangs his head
Over the silent stream.

His head is with a halter bound;
The halter seizing, Peter leapt
Upon the Creature's back, and plied
With ready heels his shaggy side;
But still the Ass his station kept.

Then Peter gave a sudden jerk,
A jerk that from a dungeon-floor
Would have pulled up an iron ring;
But still the heavy-headed Thing
Stood just as he had stood before!

Quoth Peter, leaping from his seat,
"There is some plot against me laid;"
Once more the little meadow-ground
And all the hoary cliffs around
He cautiously surveyed.

All, all is silent—rocks and woods,
All still and silent—far and near!
Only the Ass, with motion dull,
Upon the pivot of his skull
Turns round his long left ear.

Thought Peter, What can mean all this?
Some ugly witchcraft must be here!
—Once more the Ass, with motion dull,
Upon the pivot of his skull
Turned round his long left ear.

Suspicion ripened into dread;
Yet with deliberate action slow,
His staff high-raising, in the pride
Of skill, upon the sounding hide,
He dealt a sturdy blow.

The poor Ass staggered with the shock;
And then, as if to take his ease,
In quiet uncomplaining mood,
Upon the spot where he had stood,
Dropped gently down upon his knees;

As gently on his side he fell;
And by the river's brink did lie;
And, while he lay like one that mourned,
The patient Beast on Peter turned
His shining hazel eye.

'Twas but one mild, reproachful look,
A look more tender than severe;
And straight in sorrow, not in dread,
He turned the eye-ball in his head
Towards the smooth river deep and clear.

Upon the Beast the sapling rings;
His lank sides heaved, his limbs they stirred;
He gave a groan, and then another,
Of that which went before the brother,
And then he gave a third.

All by the moonlight river side
He gave three miserable groans;
And not till now hath Peter seen
How gaunt the Creature is,—how lean
And sharp his staring bones!

With legs stretched out and stiff he lay:—
No word of kind commiseration
Fell at the sight from Peter's tongue;
With hard contempt his heart was wrung,
With hatred and vexation.

The meagre beast lay still as death;
And Peter's lips with fury quiver;
Quoth he, "You little mulish dog,
I'll fling your carcass like a log
Head-foremost down the river!"

An impious oath confirmed the threat—
Whereat from the earth on which he lay
To all the echoes, south and north,
And east and west, the Ass sent forth
A long and clamorous bray!

This outcry, on the heart of Peter,
Seems like a note of joy to strike,—
Joy at the heart of Peter knocks;
But in the echo of the rocks
Was something Peter did not like.

Whether to cheer his coward breast,
Or that he could not break the chain,
In this serene and solemn hour,
Twined round him by demoniac power,
To the blind work he turned again.

Among the rocks and winding crags;
Among the mountains far away;
Once more the Ass did lengthen out
More ruefully a deep-drawn shout,
The hard dry see-saw of his horrible bray!

What is there now in Peter's heart!
Or whence the might of this strange sound?
The moon uneasy looked and dimmer,
The broad blue heavens appeared to glimmer,
And the rocks staggered all around—

From Peter's hand the sapling dropped !
Threat has he none to execute ;
" If any one should come and see
That I am here, they'll think," quoth he,
" I'm helping this poor dying brute."

He scans the Ass from limb to limb,
And ventures now to uplift his eyes ;
More steady looks the moon, and clear,
More like themselves the rocks appear
And touch more quiet skies.

His scorn returns—his hate revives ;
He stoops the Ass's neck to seize
With malice—that again takes flight ;
For in the pool a startling sight
Meets him, among the inverted trees.

Is it the moon's distorted face ?
The ghost-like image of a cloud ?
Is it a gallows there portrayed ?
Is Peter of himself afraid ?
Is it a coffin,—or a shroud ?

A grisly idol hewn in stone ?
Or imp from witch's lap let fall ?
Perhaps a ring of shining fairies ?
Such as pursue their feared vagaries
In sylvan bower, or haunted hall ?

Is it a fiend that to a stake
Of fire his desperate self is tethering ?
Or stubborn spirit doomed to yell
In solitary ward or cell,
Ten thousand miles from all his brethren ?

Never did pulse so quickly throb,
And never heart so loudly panted ;
He looks, he cannot choose but look ;
Like some one reading in a book—
A book that is enchanted.

Ah, well-a-day for Peter Bell !
He will be turned to iron soon,
Meet Statue for the court of Fear !
His hat is up—and every hair
Bristles, and whitens in the moon !

He looks, he ponders, looks again ;
He sees a motion—hears a groan ;
His eyes will burst—his heart will break—
He gives a loud and frightful shriek,
And back he falls, as if his life were flown !

PART SECOND.

We left our Hero in a trance,
Beneath the alders, near the river ;
The Ass is by the river-side,
And, where the feeble breezes glide,
Upon the stream the moonbeams quiver.

A happy respite ! but at length
He feels the glimmering of the moon ;
Wakes with glazed eye, and feebly sighing—
To sink, perhaps, where he is lying,
Into a second swoon !

He lifts his head, he sees his staff ;
He touches—'tis to him a treasure !
Faint recollection seems to tell
That he is yet where mortals dwell—
A thought received with languid pleasure !

His head upon his elbow propped,
Becoming less and less perplexed,
Sky-ward he looks—to rock and wood—
And then—upon the glassy flood
His wandering eye is fixed.

Thought he, that is the face of one
In his last sleep securely bound !
So toward the stream his head he bent,
And downward thrust his staff, intent
The river's depth to sound.

Now—like a tempest-shattered bark,
That overwhelmed and prostrate lies,
And in a moment to the verge
Is lifted of a foaming surge—
Full suddenly the Ass doth rise !

His staring bones all shake with joy,
And close by Peter's side he stands :
While Peter o'er the river bends,
The little Ass his neck extends,
And fondly licks his hands.

Such life is in the Ass's eyes,
Such life is in his limbs and ears ;
That Peter Bell, if he had been
The veriest coward ever seen,
Must now have thrown aside his fears.

The Ass looks on—and to his work
Is Peter quietly resigned ;
He touches here—he touches there—
And now among the dead man's hair
His sapling Peter has entwined.

He pulls—and looks—and pulls again ;
 And he whom the poor Ass had lost,
 The man who had been four days dead,
 Head-foremost from the river's bed
 Uprises like a ghost !

And Peter draws him to dry land ;
 And through the brain of Peter pass
 Some poignant twitches, fast and faster ;
 "No doubt," quoth he, "he is the Master
 Of this poor miserable Ass !"

The meagre Shadow that looks on—
 What would he now ? what is he doing ?
 His sudden fit of joy is flown,—
 He on his knees hath laid him down,
 As if he were his grief renewing ;

But no—that Peter on his back
 Must mount, he shews well as he can :
 Thought Peter then, come weal or woe,
 I'll do what he would have me do,
 In pity to this poor drowned man.

With that resolve he boldly mounts
 Upon the pleased and thankful Ass ;
 And then, without a moment's stay,
 That earnest Creature turned away,
 Leaving the body on the grass.

Intent upon his faithful watch,
 The Beast four days and nights had past ;
 A sweeter meadow ne'er was seen,
 And there the Ass four days had been,
 Nor ever once did break his fast :

Yet firm his step, and stout his heart ;
 The mead is crossed—the quarry's mouth
 Is reached ; but there the trusty guide
 Into a thicket turns aside,
 And deftly ambles towards the south.

When hark a burst of doleful sound !
 And Peter honestly might say,
 The like came never to his ears,
 Though he has been, full thirty years,
 A rover—night and day !

'Tis not a plover of the moors,
 'Tis not a bittern of the fen ;
 Nor can it be a barking fox,
 Nor night-bird chambered in the rocks,
 Nor wild-cat in a woody glen !

The Ass is startled—and stops short
 Right in the middle of the thicket ;
 And Peter, wont to whistle loud
 Whether alone or in a crowd,
 Is silent as a silent cricket.

What ails you now, my little Best ?
 Well may you tremble and look grave !
 This cry—that rings along the wood,
 This cry—that floats adown the flood,
 Comes from the entrance of a cave :

I see a blooming Wood-boy there,
 And if I had the power to say
 How sorrowful the wanderer is,
 Your heart would be as sad as his
 Till you had kissed his tears away !

Grasping a hawthorn branch in hand,
 All bright with berries ripe and red,
 Into the cavern's mouth he peeps ;
 Thence back into the moonlight creeps ;
 Whom seeks he—whom ?—the silent dead :

His father !—Him doth he require—
 Him hath he sought with fruitless pains,
 Among the rocks, behind the trees ;
 Now creeping on his hands and knees,
 Now running o'er the open plains.

And hither is he come at last,
 When he through such a day has gone,
 By this dark cave to be distrest
 Like a poor bird—her plundered nest
 Hovering around with dolorous moan !

Of that intense and piercing cry
 The listening Ass conjectures well ;
 Wild as it is, he there can read
 Some intermingled notes that plead
 With touches irresistible.

But Peter—when he saw the Ass
 Not only stop but turn, and change
 The cherished tenor of his pace
 That lamentable cry to chase—
 It wrought in him conviction strange ;

A faith that, for the dead man's sake
 And this poor slave who loved him well,
 Vengeance upon his head will fall,
 Some visitation worse than all
 Which ever till this night befel.

Meanwhile the Ass to reach his home,
Is striving stoutly as he may ;
But, while he climbs the woody hill,
The cry grows weak—and weaker still ;
And now at last it dies away.

So with his freight the Creature turns
Into a gloomy grove of beech,
Along the shade with footsteps true
Descending slowly, till the two
The open moonlight reach.

And there, along the narrow dell,
A fair smooth pathway you discern,
A length of green and open road—
As if it from a fountain flowed—
Winding away between the fern.

The rocks that tower on either side
Build up a wild fantastic scene ;
Temples like those among the Hindoos,
And mosques, and spires, and abbey windows,
And castles all with ivy green !

And, while the Ass pursues his way,
Along this solitary dell,
As pensively his steps advance,
The mosques and spires change countenance,
And look at Peter Bell !

That unintelligible cry
Hath left him high in preparation,—
Convinced that he, or soon or late,
This very night will meet his fate—
And so he sits in expectation !

The strenuous Animal hath clomb
With the green path ; and now he wends
Where, shining like the smoothest sea,
In undisturbed immensity
A level plain extends.

But whence this faintly-rustling sound
By which the journeying pair are chased ?
—A withered leaf is close behind,
Light plaything for the sportive wind
Upon that solitary waste.

When Peter spied the moving thing,
It only doubled his distress ;
“Where there is not a bush or tree,
The very leaves they follow me—
So huge hath been my wickedness !”

To a close lane they now are come,
Where, as before, the enduring Ass
Moves on without a moment's stop,
Nor once turns round his head to crop
A bramble-leaf or blade of grass.

Between the hedges as they go,
The white dust sleeps upon the lane ;
And Peter, ever and anon
Back-looking, sees, upon a stone,
Or in the dust, a crimson stain.

A stain—as of a drop of blood
By moonlight made more faint and wan ;
Ha ! why these sinkings of despair ?
He knows not how the blood comes there—
And Peter is a wicked man.

At length he spies a bleeding wound,
Where he had struck the Ass's head ;
He sees the blood, knows what it is,—
A glimpse of sudden joy was his,
But then it quickly fled ;

Of him whom sudden death had seized
He thought,—of thee, O faithful Ass !
And once again those ghastly pains,
Shoot to and fro through heart and reins,
And through his brain like lightning pass.

PART THIRD.

I've heard of one, a gentle Soul,
Though given to sadness and to gloom,
And for the fact will vouch,—one night
It chanced that by a taper's light
This man was reading in his room ;

Bending, as you or I might bend
At night o'er any pious book,
When sudden blackness overspread
The snow-white page on which he read,
And made the good man round him look.

The chamber walls were dark all round,—
And to his book he turned again ;
—The light had left the lonely taper,
And formed itself upon the paper
Into large letters—bright and plain !

The godly book was in his hand—
And, on the page, more black than coal,
Appeared, set forth in strange array,
A word—which to his dying day
Perplexed the good man's gentle soul.

The ghostly word, thus plainly seen,
Did never from his lips depart ;
But he hath said, poor gentle wight !
It brought full many a sin to light
Out of the bottom of his heart.

Dread Spirits ! to confound the meek
Why wander from your course so far,
Disordering colour, form, and stature !
—Let good men feel the soul of nature,
And see things as they are.

Yet, potent Spirits ! well I know,
How ye, that play with soul and sense,
Are not unused to trouble friends
Of goodness, for most gracious ends—
And this I speak in reverence !

But might I give advice to you,
Whom in my fear I love so well ;
From men of pensive virtue go,
Dread Beings ! and your empire show
On hearts like that of Peter Bell.

Your presence often have I felt
In darkness and the stormy night ;
And, with like force, if need there be,
Ye can put forth your agency
When earth is calm, and heaven is bright.

Then, coming from the wayward world,
That powerful world in which ye dwell,
Come, Spirits of the Mind ! and try
To-night, beneath the moonlight sky,
What may be done with Peter Bell !

—O, would that some more skilful voice
My further labour might prevent !
Kind Listeners, that around me sit,
I feel that I am all unfit
For such high argument.

I've played, I've danced, with my narration ;
I loitered long ere I began :
Ye waited then on my good pleasure ;
Pour out indulgence still, in measure
As liberal as ye can !

Our Travellers, ye remember well,
Are thridding a sequestered lane ;
And Peter many tricks is trying,
And many anodynes applying,
To ease his conscience of its pain.

By this his heart is lighter far ;
And, finding that he can account
So snugly for that crimson stain,
His evil spirit up again
Does like an empty bucket mount.

And Peter is a deep logician
Who hath no lack of wit mercurial ;
“Blood drops—leaves rustle—yet,” quoth he,
“This poor man never, but for me,
Could have had Christian burial.

And, say the best you can, 'tis plain,
That here has been some wicked dealing ;
No doubt the devil in me wrought ;
I'm not the man who could have thought
An Ass like this was worth the stealing !”

So from his pocket Peter takes
His shining horn tobacco-box ;
And, in a light and careless way,
As men who with their purpose play,
Upon the lid he knocks.

Let them whose voice can stop the clouds,
Whose cunning eye can see the wind,
Tell to a curious world the cause
Why, making here a sudden pause,
The Ass turned round his head, and *grinned*.

Appalling process ! I have marked
The like on heath, in lonely wood ;
And, verily, have seldom met
A spectacle more hideous—yet
It suited Peter's present mood.

And, grinning in his turn, his teeth
He in jocose defiance showed—
When, to upset his spiteful mirth,
A murmur, pent within the earth,
In the dead earth beneath the road,

Rolled audibly ! it swept along,
A muffled noise—a rumbling sound !—
'Twas by a troop of miners made,
Plying with gunpowder their trade,
Some twenty fathoms underground.

Small cause of dire effect ! for, surely,
If ever mortal, King or Cotter,
Believed that earth was charged to quake
And yawn for his unworthy sake,
'Twas Peter Bell the Potter.

But, as an oak in breathless air
Will stand though to the centre hewn ;
Or as the weakest things, if frost
Have stiffened them, maintain their post ;
So he, beneath the gazing moon !—

The Beast bestriding thus, he reached
A spot where, in a sheltering cove,
A little chapel stands alone,
With greenest ivy overgrown,
And tufted with an ivy grove ;

Dying insensibly away
From human thoughts and purposes,
It seemed—wall, window, roof and tower—
To bow to some transforming power,
And blend with the surrounding trees.

As ruinous a place it was,
Thought Peter, in the shire of Fife
That served my turn, when following still
From land to land a reckless will
I married my sixth wife !

The unheeding Ass moves slowly on,
And now is passing by an inn
Brim-full of a carousing crew,
That make, with curses not a few,
An uproar and a drunken din.

I cannot well express the thoughts
Which Peter in those noises found ;—
A stifling power compressed his frame,
While-as a swimming darkness came
Over that dull and dreary sound.

For well did Peter know the sound ;
The language of those drunken joys
To him, a jovial soul, I ween,
But a few hours ago, had been
A gladsome and a welcome noise.

Now, turned adrift into the past,
He finds no solace in his course ;
Like planet-stricken men of yore,
He trembles, smitten to the core
By strong compunction and remorse.

But, more than all, his heart is stung
To think of one, almost a child ;
A sweet and playful Highland girl,
As light and beauteous as a squirrel,
As beauteous and as wild !

Her dwelling was a lonely house,
A cottage in a heathy dell ;
And she put on her gown of green,
And left her mother at sixteen,
And followed Peter Bell.

But many good and pious thoughts
Had she ; and, in the kirk to pray,
Two long Scotch miles, through rain or snow,
To kirk she had been used to go,
Twice every Sabbath-day.

And, when she followed Peter Bell,
It was to lead an honest life ;
For he, with tongue not used to falter,
Had pledged his troth before the altar
To love her as his wedded wife.

A mother's hope is hers ;—but soon
She drooped and pined like one forlorn ;
From Scripture she a name did borrow ;
Benoni, or the child of sorrow,
She called her babe unborn.

For she had learned how Peter lived,
And took it in most grievous part ;
She to the very bone was worn,
And, ere that little child was born,
Died of a broken heart.

And now the Spirits of the Mind
Are busy with poor Peter Bell ;
Upon the rights of visual sense
Usurping, with a prevalence
More terrible than magic spell.

Close by a brake of flowering furze
(Above it shivering aspens play)
He sees an unsubstantial creature,
His very self in form and feature,
Not four yards from the broad highway :

And stretched beneath the furze he sees
The Highland girl—it is no other ;
And hears her crying as she cried,
The very moment that she died,
“ My mother ! oh my mother ! ”

The sweat pours down from Peter's face,
So grievous is his heart's contrition ;
With agony his eye-balls ache
While he beholds by the furze-brake
This miserable vision !

Calm is the well-deserving brute,
His peace hath no offence betrayed;
 But now, while down that slope he wends,
 A voice to Peter's ear ascends,
 Resounding from the woody glade:

The voice, though clamorous as a horn
 Re-echoed by a naked rock,
 Comes from that tabernacle—List!
 Within, a fervent Methodist
 Is preaching to no heedless flock!

"Repent! repent!" he cries aloud,
 While yet ye may find mercy;—strive
 To love the Lord with all your might;
 Turn to him, seek him day and night,
 And save your souls alive!

Repent! repent! though ye have gone,
 Through paths of wickedness and woe,
 After the Babylonian harlot;
 And, though your sins be red as scarlet,
 They shall be white as snow!"

Even as he passed the door, these words
 Did plainly come to Peter's ears;
 And they such joyful tidings were,
 The joy was more than he could bear!—
 He melted into tears.

Sweet tears of hope and tenderness!
 And fast they fell, a plenteous shower!
 His nerves, his sinews seemed to melt;
 Through all his iron frame was felt
 A gentle, a relaxing, power!

Each fibre of his frame was weak;
 Weak all the animal within;
 But, in its helplessness, grew mild
 And gentle as an infant child,
 An infant that has known no sin.

'Tis said, meek Beast! that, through Heaven's grace,
 He not unmoved did notice now
 The cross upon thy shoulder scored,
 For lasting impress, by the Lord
 To whom all human-kind shall bow;

Memorial of his touch—that day
 When Jesus humbly deigned to ride,
 Entering the proud Jerusalem,
 By an immeasurable stream
 Of shouting people deified!

Meanwhile the persevering Ass,
 Turned towards a gate that hung in view
 Across a shady lane; his chest
 Against the yielding gate he pressed
 And quietly passed through.

And up the stony lane he goes;
 No ghost more softly ever trod;
 Among the stones and pebbles, he
 Sets down his hoofs inaudibly,
 As if with felt his hoofs were shod.

Along the lane the trusty Ass
 Went twice two hundred yards or more,
 And no one could have guessed his aim,—
 Till to a lonely house he came,
 And stopped beside the door.

Thought Peter, 'tis the poor man's home!
 He listens—not a sound is heard
 Save from the trickling household rill;
 But, stepping o'er the cottage-sill,
 Forthwith a little Girl appeared.

She to the Meeting-house was bound
 In hopes some tidings there to gather:
 No glimpse it is, no doubtful gleam;
 She saw—and uttered with a scream,
 "My father! here's my father!"

The very word was plainly heard,
 Heard plainly by the wretched Mother—
 Her joy was like a deep affright:
 And forth she rushed into the light,
 And saw it was another!

And, instantly, upon the earth,
 Beneath the full moon shining bright,
 Close to the Ass's feet she fell;
 At the same moment Peter Bell
 Dismounts in most unhappy plight.

As he beheld the Woman lie
 Breathless and motionless, the mind
 Of Peter sadly was confused;
 But, though to such demands unused,
 And helpless almost as the blind,

He raised her up; and, while he held
 Her body propped against his knee,
 The Woman waked—and when she spied
 The poor Ass standing by her side,
 She moaned most bitterly.

"Oh! God be praised—my heart's at ease—
For he is dead—I know it well!"
—At this she wept a bitter flood;
And, in the best way that he could,
His tale did Peter tell.

He trembles—he is pale as death;
His voice is weak with perturbation;
He turns aside his head, he pauses;
Poor Peter from a thousand causes,
Is crippled sore in his narration.

At length she learned how he espied
The Ass in that small meadow-ground;
And that her Husband now lay dead,
Beside that luckless river's bed
In which he had been drowned.

A piercing look the Widow cast
Upon the Beast that near her stands;
She sees 'tis he, that 'tis the same;
She calls the poor Ass by his name,
And wrings, and wrings her hands.

"O wretched loss—untimely stroke!
If he had died upon his bed!
He knew not one forewarning pain;
He never will come home again—
Is dead, for ever dead!"

Beside the Woman Peter stands;
His heart is opening more and more;
A holy sense pervades his mind;
He feels what he for human kind
Had never felt before.

At length, by Peter's arm sustained,
The Woman rises from the ground—
"Oh, mercy! something must be done,
My little Rachel, you must run,—
Some willing neighbour must be found.

Make haste—my little Rachel—do,
The first you meet with—bid him come,
Ask him to lend his horse to-night,
And this good Man, whom Heaven requite,
Will help to bring the body home."

Away goes Rachel weeping loud;—
An Infant, waked by her distress,
Makes in the house a piteous cry;
And Peter hears the Mother sigh,
"Seven are they, and all fatherless!"

And now is Peter taught to feel
That man's heart is a holy thing;
And Nature, through a world of death,
Breathes into him a second breath,
More searching than the breath of spring.

Upon a stone the Woman sits
In agony of silent grief—
From his own thoughts did Peter start;
He longs to press her to his heart,
From love that cannot find relief.

But roused, as if through every limb
Had past a sudden shock of dread,
The Mother o'er the threshold flies,
And up the cottage stairs she hies,
And on the pillow lays her burning head.

And Peter turns his steps aside
Into a shade of darksome trees,
Where he sits down, he knows not how,
With his hands pressed against his brow,
His elbows on his tremulous knees.

There, self-involved, does Peter sit
Until no sign of life he makes,
As if his mind were sinking deep
Through years that have been long asleep!
The trance is passed away—he wakes;

He lifts his head—and sees the Ass
Yet standing in the clear moonshine;
"When shall I be as good as thou?
Oh! would, poor beast, that I had now
A heart but half as good as thine!"

But *He*—who deviously hath sought
His Father through the lonesome woods,
Hath sought, proclaiming to the ear
Of night his grief and sorrowful fear—
He comes, escaped from fields and floods;—

With weary pace is drawing nigh;
He sees the Ass—and nothing living
Had ever such a fit of joy
As hath this little orphan Boy,
For he has no misgiving!

Forth to the gentle Ass he springs,
And up about his neck he climbs;
In loving words he talks to him,
He kisses, kisses face and limb,—
He kisses him a thousand times!

This Peter sees, while in the shade
He stood beside the cottage-door ;
And Peter Bell, the ruffian wild,
Sobs loud, he sobs even like a child,
"Oh! God, I can endure no more!"

—Here ends my Tale: for in a trice
Arrived a neighbour with his horse ;
Peter went forth with him straightway ;
And, with due care, ere break of day,
Together they brought back the Corse.

And many years did this poor Ass,
Whom once it was my luck to see
Cropping the shrubs of Leming-Lane,
Help by his labour to maintain
The Widow and her family.

And Peter Bell, who, till that night,
Had been the wildest of his clan,
Forsook his crimes, renounced his folly,
And, after ten months' melancholy,
Became a good and honest man.

MISCELLANEOUS SONNETS.

DEDICATION.

TO ———.

HAPPY the feeling from the bosom thrown
In perfect shape (whose beauty Time shall spare
Though a breath made it) like a bubble blown
For summer pastime into wanton air ;
Happy the thought best likened to a stone
Of the sea-beach, when, polished with nice care,
Veins it discovers exquisite and rare,

Which for the loss of that moist gleam atone
That tempted first to gather it. That here,
O chief of Friends! such feelings I present,
To thy regard, with thoughts so fortunate,
Were a vain notion; but the hope is dear,
That thou, if not with partial joy elate,
Wilt smile upon this gift with more than mild content!

PART I.

I.

NUNS fret not at their convent's narrow room ;
And hermits are contented with their cells ;
And students with their pensive citadels ;
Maids at the wheel, the weaver at his loom,
Sit blithe and happy ; bees that soar for bloom,
High as the highest Peak of Furness-fells,
Will murmur by the hour in foxglove bells :
In truth the prison, unto which we doom
Ourselves, no prison is : and hence for me,
In sundry moods, 'twas pastime to be bound
Within the Sonnet's scanty plot of ground ;
Pleased if some Souls (for such there needs must
be)
Who have felt the weight of too much liberty,
Should find brief solace there, as I have found.

II.

ADMONITION.

Intended more particularly for the perusal of those who may have
happened to be enamoured of some beautiful Place of Retreat, in
the Country of the Lakes.

WELL may'st thou halt—and gaze with brightening
eye!

The lovely Cottage in the guardian nook
Hath stirred thee deeply ; with its own dear brook,
Its own small pasture, almost its own sky !
But covet not the Abode ;—forbear to sigh,
As many do, repining while they look ;
Intruders—who would tear from Nature's book
This precious leaf, with harsh impiety.
Think what the Home must be if it were thine,
Even thine, though few thy wants !—Roof, window,
door,

The very flowers are sacred to the Poor,
The roses to the porch which they entwine :
Yea, all, that now enchants thee, from the day
On which it should be touched, would melt away.

III.

"BELOVED Vale!" I said, "when I shall con
Those many records of my childish years,
Remembrance of myself and of my peers
Will press me down : to think of what is gone
Will be an awful thought, if life have one."
But, when into the Vale I came, no fears
Distressed me ; from mine eyes escaped no tears ;
Deep thought, or dread remembrance, had I none.
By doubts and thousand petty fancies crost
I stood, of simple shame the blushing Thrall ;
So narrow seemed the brooks, the fields so small !
A Juggler's balls old Time about him tossed ;
I looked, I stared, I smiled, I laughed ; and all
The weight of sadness was in wonder lost.

IV.

AT APPLETHWAITE, NEAR KESWICK.

1804.

BEAUMONT ! it was thy wish that I should rear
A seemly Cottage in this sunny Dell,
On favoured ground, thy gift, where I might dwell
In neighbourhood with One to me most dear,
That undivided we from year to year
Might work in our high Calling—a bright hope
To which our fancies, mingling, gave free scope
Till checked by some necessities severe.
And should these slacken, honoured BEAUMONT !
still

Even then we may perhaps in vain implore
Leave of our fate thy wishes to fulfil.
Whether this boon be granted us or not,
Old Skiddaw will look down upon the Spot
With pride, the Muses love it evermore.

V.

1801.

PELION and Ossa flourish side by side,
Together in immortal books enrolled :
His ancient dower Olympus hath not sold ;
And that inspiring Hill, which* did divide
Into two ample horns his forehead wide,
Shines with poetic radiance as of old ;
While not an English Mountain we behold
By the celestial Muses glorified.
Yet round our sea-girt shore they rise in crowds :
What was the great Parnassus' self to Thee,
Mount Skiddaw ! In his natural sovereignty
Our British Hill is nobler far ; he shrouds
His double front among Atlantic clouds,
And pours forth streams more sweet than Castaly.

VI.

THERE is a little unpretending Rill
Of limpid water, humbler far than aught
That ever among Men or Naiads sought
Notice or name !—It quivers down the hill,
Furrowing its shallow way with dubious will ;
Yet to my mind this scanty Stream is brought
Often than Ganges or the Nile ; a thought
Of private recollection sweet and still !
Months perish with their moons ; year treads on
year ;

But, faithful Emma ! thou with me canst say
That, while ten thousand pleasures disappear,
And flies their memory fast almost as they ;
The immortal Spirit of one happy day
Lingers beside that Rill, in vision clear.

VII.

HER only pilot the soft breeze, the boat
Lingers, but Fancy is well satisfied ;
With keen-eyed Hope, with Memory, at her side,
And the glad Muse at liberty to note
All that to each is precious, as we float
Gently along ; regardless who shall chide
If the heavens smile, and leave us free to glide,
Happy Associates breathing air remote
From trivial cares. But, Fancy and the Muse,
Why have I crowded this small bark with you
And others of your kind, ideal crew !
While here sits One whose brightness owes its hues
To flesh and blood ; no Goddess from above,
No fleeting Spirit, but my own true Love !

VIII.

THE fairest, brightest, hues of ether fade ;
The sweetest notes must terminate and die ;
O Friend ! thy flute has breathed a harmony
Softly resounded through this rocky glade ;
Such strains of rapture as* the Genius played
In his still haunt on Bagdad's summit high ;
He who stood visible to Mirza's eye,
Never before to human sight betrayed.
Lo, in the vale, the mists of evening spread !
The visionary Arches are not there,
Nor the green Islands, nor the shining Seas ;
Yet sacred is to me this Mountain's head,
Whence I have risen, uplifted on the breeze
Of harmony, above all earthly care.

* See the Vision of Mirza in the Spectator.

IX.

UPON THE SIGHT OF A BEAUTIFUL PICTURE,

Painted by Sir G. H. Beaumont, Bart.

PRAISED be the Art whose subtle power could stay
 Yon cloud, and fix it in that glorious shape ;
 Nor would permit the thin smoke to escape,
 Nor those bright sunbeams to forsake the day ;
 Which stopped that band of travellers on their way,
 Ere they were lost within the shady wood ;
 And showed the Bark upon the glassy flood
 For ever anchored in her sheltering bay.
 Soul-soothing Art ! whom Morning, Noon-tide,
 Even,
 Do serve with all their changeful pageantry ;
 Thou, with ambition modest yet sublime,
 Here, for the sight of mortal man, hast given
 To one brief moment caught from fleeting time
 The appropriate calm of blest eternity.

X.

"WHY, Minstrel, these untuneful murmurings—
 Dull, flagging notes that with each other jar ?"
 "Think, gentle Lady, of a Harp so far
 From its own country, and forgive the strings."
 A simple answer ! but even so forth springs,
 From the Castalian fountain of the heart,
 The Poetry of Life, and all *that* Art
 Divine of words quickening insensate things.
 From the submissive necks of guiltless men
 Stretched on the block, the glittering axe recoils ;
 Sun, moon, and stars, all struggle in the toils
 Of mortal sympathy ; what wonder then
 That the poor Harp distempered music yields
 To its sad Lord, far from his native fields ?

XI.

AERIAL ROCK—whose solitary brow
 From this low threshold daily meets my sight ;
 When I step forth to hail the morning light ;
 Or quit the stars with a lingering farewell—how
 Shall Fancy pay to thee a grateful vow ?
 How, with the Muse's aid, her love attest ?
 —By planting on thy naked head the crest
 Of an imperial Castle, which the plough
 Of ruin shall not touch. Innocent scheme !
 That doth presume no more than to supply
 A grace the sinuous vale and roaring stream
 Want, through neglect of hoar Antiquity.
 Rise, then, ye votive Towers ! and catch a gleam
 Of golden sunset, ere it fade and die.

XII.

TO SLEEP.

O GENTLE SLEEP ! do they belong to thee,
 These twinklings of oblivion ? Thou dost love
 To sit in meekness, like the brooding Dove,
 A captive never wishing to be free.
 This tiresome night, O Sleep ! thou art to me
 A Fly, that up and down himself doth shove
 Upon a fretful rivulet, now above
 Now on the water vexed with mockery.
 I have no pain that calls for patience, no ;
 Hence am I cross and peevish as a child :
 Am pleased by fits to have thee for my foe,
 Yet ever willing to be reconciled :
 O gentle Creature ! do not use me so,
 But once and deeply let me be beguiled.

XIII.

TO SLEEP.

FOND words have oft been spoken to thee, Sleep !
 And thou hast had thy store of tenderest names ;
 The very sweetest, Fancy culls or frames,
 When thankfulness of heart is strong and deep !
 Dear Bosom-child we call thee, that dost steep
 In rich reward all suffering ; Balm that tames
 All anguish ; Saint that evil thoughts and aims
 Takest away, and into souls dost creep,
 Like to a breeze from heaven. Shall I alone,
 I surely not a man ungently made,
 Call thee worst Tyrant by which Flesh is crost ?
 Perverse, self-willed to own and to disown,
 Mere slave of them who never for thee prayed,
 Still last to come where thou art wanted most !

XIV.

TO SLEEP.

A FLOCK of sheep that leisurely pass by,
 One after one ; the sound of rain, and bees
 Murmuring ; the fall of rivers, winds and seas,
 Smooth fields, white sheets of water, and pure sky ;
 I have thought of all by turns, and yet do lie
 Sleepless ! and soon the small birds' melodies
 Must hear, first uttered from my orchard trees ;
 And the first cuckoo's melancholy cry.
 Even thus last night, and two nights more, I lay,
 And could not win thee, Sleep ! by any stealth :
 So do not let me wear to-night away :
 Without Thee what is all the morning's wealth ?
 Come, blessed barrier between day and day,
 Dear mother of fresh thoughts and joyous health !

XV.

THE WILD DUCK'S NEST.

THE imperial Consort of the Fairy-king
Owns not a sylvan bower ; or gorgeous cell
With emerald floored, and with purpureal shell
Ceilinged and roofed ; that is so fair a thing
As this low structure, for the tasks of Spring,
Prepared by one who loves the buoyant swell
Of the brisk waves, yet here consents to dwell ;
And spreads in steadfast peace her brooding wing.
Words cannot paint the o'ershadowing yew-tree
And dimly-gleaming Nest,—a hollow crown [bough,
Of golden leaves inlaid with silver down,
Fine as the mother's softest plumes allow :
I gazed—and, self-accused while gazing, sighed
For human-kind, weak slaves of cumbrous pride !

XVI.

WRITTEN UPON A BLANK LEAF IN "THE COMPLETE ANGLER."

WHILE flowing rivers yield a blameless sport,
Shall live the name of Walton : Sage benign !
Whose pen, the mysteries of the rod and line
Unfolding, did not fruitlessly exhort
To reverend watching of each still report
That Nature utters from her rural shrine.
Meek, nobly versed in simple discipline—
He found the longest summer day too short,
To his loved pastime given by sedgy Lee,
Or down the tempting maze of Shawford brook—
Fairer than life itself, in this sweet Book,
The cowslip-bank and shady willow-tree ;
And the fresh meads—where flowed, from every
Of his full bosom, gladsome Piety ! [nook

XVII.

TO THE POET, JOHN DYER.

BARD of the Fleece, whose skilful genius made
That work a living landscape fair and bright ;
Nor hallowed less with musical delight
Than those soft scenes through which thy child-
hood strayed,
Those southern tracts of Cambria, 'deep embayed,
With green hills fenced, with ocean's murmur lull'd ;
Though hasty Fame hath many a chaplet culled
For worthless brows, while in the pensive shade
Of cold neglect she leaves thy head ungraced,
Yet pure and powerful minds, hearts meek and still,
A grateful few, shall love thy modest Lay,
Long as the shepherd's bleating flock shall stray
O'er naked Snowdon's wide ærial waste ;
Long as the thrush shall pipe on Grongar Hill !

XVIII.

ON THE DETRACTION WHICH FOLLOWED THE PUBLICATION OF A CERTAIN POEM.

See Milton's Sonnet, beginning, "A Book was writ of late called
"Tetrachordon,"

A BOOK came forth of late, called PETER BELL ;
Not negligent the style ;—the matter ?—good
As aught that song records of Robin Hood ;
Or Roy, renowned through many a Scottish dell ;
But some (who brook those hackneyed themes
full well,
Nor heat, at Tam o' Shanter's name, their blood)
Waxed wroth, and with foul claws, a harpy brood,
On Bard and Hero clamorously fell.
Heed not, wild Rover once through heath and glen,
Who mad'st at length the better life thy choice,
Heed not such onset ! nay, if praise of men
To thee appear not an unmeaning voice,
Lift up that grey-haired forehead, and rejoice
In the just tribute of thy Poet's pen !

XIX.

GRIEF, thou hast lost an ever ready friend
Now that the cottage Spinning-wheel is mute ;
And Care—a comforter that best could suit
Her froward mood, and softliest reprehend ;
And Love—a charmer's voice, that used to lend,
More efficaciously than aught that flows
From harp or lute, kind influence to compose
The throbbing pulse—else troubled without end :
Even Joy could tell, Joy craving truce and rest
From her own overflow, what power sedate
On those revolving motions did await
Assiduously—to soothe her aching breast ;
And, to a point of just relief, abate
The mantling triumphs of a day too blest.

XX.

TO S. H.

EXCUSE is needless when with love sincere
Of occupation, not by fashion led, [spread ;
Thou turn'st the Wheel that slept with dust o'er-
My nerves from no such murmur shrink,—tho' near,
Soft as the Dorhawk's to a distant ear,
When twilight shades darken the mountain's head.
Even She who toils to spin our vital thread
Might smile on work, O Lady, once so dear
To household virtues. Venerable Art,
Torn from the Poor ! yet shall kind Heaven protect
Its own ; though Rulers, with undue respect,
Trusting to crowded factory and mart
And proud discoveries of the intellect,
Heed not the pillage of man's ancient heart.

XXI.

COMPOSED IN ONE OF THE VALLEYS OF WESTMORE-
LAND, ON EASTER SUNDAY.

With each recurrence of this glorious morn
That saw the Saviour in his human frame
Rise from the dead, erewhile the Cottage-dame
Put on fresh raiment—till that hour unworn :
Domestic hands the home-bred wool had shorn,
And she who span it culled the daintiest fleece,
In thoughtful reverence to the Prince of Peace,
Whose temples bled beneath the platted thorn.
A blest estate when piety sublime
These humble props disdained not ! O green dales !
Had may I be who heard your sabbath chime
When Art's abused inventions were unknown ;
Kind Nature's various wealth was all your own ;
And benefits were weighed in Reason's scales !

XXII.

DECAY OF PIETY.

Oft have I seen, ere Time had ploughed my cheek,
Matrons and Sires—who, punctual to the call
Of their loved Church, on fast or festival
Through the long year the House of Prayer would
By Christmas snows, by visitation bleak [seek :
Of Easter winds, unscared, from hut or hall
They came to lowly bench or sculptured stall,
But with one fervour of devotion meek.
I see the places where they once were known,
And ask, surrounded even by kneeling crowds,
Is ancient Piety for ever flown ?
Alas ! even then they seemed like fleecy clouds
That, struggling through the western sky, have won
Their pensive light from a departed sun !

XXIII.

COMPOSED ON THE EVE OF THE MARRIAGE OF A
FRIEND IN THE VALE OF GRASMERE, 1812.

What need of clamorous bells, or ribands gay,
These humble nuptials to proclaim or grace ?
Angels of love, look down upon the place ;
Shed on the chosen vale a sun-bright day !
Yet no proud gladness would the Bride display
Even for such promise :—serious is her face,
Modest her mien ; and she, whose thoughts keep pace
With gentleness, in that becoming way
Will thank you. Faultless does the Maid appear ;
No disproportion in her soul, no strife :
But, when the closer view of wedded life
Hath shown that nothing human can be clear
From frailty, for that insight may the Wife
To her indulgent Lord become more dear.

XXIV.

FROM THE ITALIAN OF MICHAEL ANGELO.

I.

Yes ! hope may with my strong desire keep pace,
And I be undeluded, unbetrayed ;
For if of our affections none finds grace
In sight of Heaven, then, wherefore hath God made
The world which we inhabit ? Better plea
Love cannot have, than that in loving thee
Glory to that eternal Peace is paid,
Who such divinity to thee imparts
As hallows and makes pure all gentle hearts.
His hope is treacherous only whose love dies
With beauty, which is varying every hour ;
But, in chaste hearts uninfluenced by the power
Of outward change, there blooms a deathless flower,
That breathes on earth the air of paradise.

XXV.

FROM THE SAME.

II.

No mortal object did these eyes behold
When first they met the placid light of thine,
And my Soul felt her destiny divine,
And hope of endless peace in me grew bold :
Heaven-born, the Soul a heaven-ward course must
Beyond the visible world she soars to seek [hold ;
(For what delights the sense is false and weak)
Ideal Form, the universal mould.
The wise man, I affirm, can find no rest
In that which perishes : nor will he lend
His heart to aught which doth on time depend.
'Tis sense, unbridled will, and not true love,
That kills the soul : love betters what is best,
Even here below, but more in heaven above.

XXVI.

FROM THE SAME. TO THE SUPREME BEING.

III.

The prayers I make will then be sweet indeed
If Thou the spirit give by which I pray :
My unassisted heart is barren clay,
That of its native self can nothing feed :
Of good and pious works thou art the seed,
That quickens only where thou say'st it may :
Unless Thou shew to us thine own true way
No man can find it : Father ! Thou must lead.
Do Thou, then, breathe those thoughts into my mind
By which such virtue may in me be bred
That in thy holy footsteps I may tread ;
The fetters of my tongue do Thou unbind,
That I may have the power to sing of thee,
And sound thy praises everlastingly.

XXVII.

SURPRISED by joy—impatient as the Wind
 I turned to share the transport—Oh! with whom
 But Thee, deep buried in the silent tomb,
 That spot which no vicissitude can find?
 Love, faithful love, recalled thee to my mind—
 But how could I forget thee? Through what power,
 Even for the least division of an hour,
 Have I been so beguiled as to be blind
 To my most grievous loss?—That thought's return
 Was the worst pang that sorrow ever bore,
 Save one, one only, when I stood forlorn,
 Knowing my heart's best treasure was no more;
 That neither present time, nor years unborn
 Could to my sight that heavenly face restore.

XXVIII.

I.

METHOUGHT I saw the footsteps of a throne
 Which mists and vapours from mine eyes did
 shroud—
 Nor view of who might sit thereon allowed;
 But all the steps and ground about were strown
 With sights the ruefullest that flesh and bone
 Ever put on; a miserable crowd,
 Sick, hale, old, young, who cried before that cloud,
 "Thou art our king, O Death! to thee we groan."
 Those steps I clomb; the mists before me gave
 Smooth way; and I beheld the face of one
 Sleeping alone within a mossy cave,
 With her face up to heaven; that seemed to have
 Pleasing remembrance of a thought foregone;
 A lovely Beauty in a summer grave!

XXIX.

NOVEMBER, 1836.

II.

EVEN so for me a Vision sanctified
 The sway of Death; long ere mine eyes had seen
 Thy countenance—the still rapture of thy mien—
 When thou, dear Sister! wert become Death's
 No trace of pain or languor could abide [Bride:
 That change :—age on thy brow was smoothed—
 thy cold
 Wan cheek at once was privileged to unfold
 A loveliness to living youth denied.
 Oh! if within me hope should e'er decline,
 The lamp of faith, lost Friend! too faintly burn;
 Then may that heaven-revealing smile of thine,
 The bright assurance, visibly return:
 And let my spirit in that power divine
 Rejoice, as, through that power, it ceased to mourn.

XXX.

It is a beauteous evening, calm and free,
 The holy time is quiet as a Nun
 Breathless with adoration; the broad sun
 Is sinking down in its tranquillity;
 The gentleness of heaven broods o'er the Sea:
 Listen! the mighty Being is awake,
 And doth with his eternal motion make
 A sound like thunder—everlastingly.
 Dear Child! dear Girl! that walkest with me
 here,
 If thou appear untouched by solemn thought,
 Thy nature is not therefore less divine:
 Thou liest in Abraham's bosom all the year;
 And worship'st at the Temple's inner shrine,
 God being with thee when we know it not.

XXXI.

WHERE lies the Land to which yon Ship must go!
 Fresh as a lark mounting at break of day,
 Festively she puts forth in trim array;
 Is she for tropic suns, or polar snow?
 What boots the inquiry?—Neither friend nor foe
 She cares for; let her travel where she may,
 She finds familiar names, a beaten way
 Ever before her, and a wind to blow.
 Yet still I ask, what haven is her mark?
 And, almost as it was when ships were rare,
 (From time to time, like Pilgrims, here and there
 Crossing the waters) doubt, and something dark,
 Of the old Sea some reverential fear,
 Is with me at thy farewell, joyous Bark!

XXXII.

WITH Ships the sea was sprinkled far and nigh,
 Like stars in heaven, and joyously it showed;
 Some lying fast at anchor in the road,
 Some veering up and down, one knew not why.
 A goodly Vessel did I then espy
 Come like a giant from a haven broad;
 And lustily along the bay she strode,
 Her tacking rich, and of apparel high.
 This Ship was nought to me, nor I to her,
 Yet I pursued her with a Lover's look;
 This Ship to all the rest did I prefer:
 When will she turn, and whither? She will brook
 No tarrying; where She comes the winds must
 stir:
 On went She, and due north her journey took.

XXXIII.

THE world is too much with us ; late and soon,
 Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers :
 Little we see in Nature that is ours ;
 We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon !
 This Sea that bares her bosom to the moon ;
 The winds that will be howling at all hours,
 And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers ;
 For this, for every thing, we are out of tune ;
 That moves us not.—Great God ! I'd rather be
 Pagan suckled in a creed outworn ;
 Than might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
 Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn ;
 Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea ;
 Or hear old Triton blow his wreathèd horn.

XXXIV.

INVOLUNT Tribe of Bards on earth are found,
 Who, while the flattering Zephyrs round them
 Play,
 In 'coigns of vantage' hang their nests of clay ;
 How quickly from that airy hold unbound,
 Off for oblivion ! To the solid ground
 Nature trusts the Mind that builds for aye ;
 Convinced that there, there only, she can lay
 Secure foundations. As the year runs round,
 Part she toils within the chosen ring ;
 While the stars shine, or while day's purple eye
 Gently closing with the flowers of spring ;
 Where even the motion of an Angel's wing
 Could interrupt the intense tranquillity
 Of silent hills, and more than silent sky.

XXXV.

WEAK is the will of Man, his judgment blind ;
 Remembrance persecutes, and Hope betrays ;
 Heavy is woe ;—and joy, for human-kind,
 A mournful thing, so transient is the blaze !
 Thus might he paint our lot of mortal days
 Who wants the glorious faculty assigned
 To elevate the more-than-reasoning Mind,
 And colour life's dark cloud with orient rays.
 Imagination is that sacred power,
 Imagination lofty and refined :
 It is hers to pluck the amaranthine flower
 Of Faith, and round the Sufferer's temples bind
 Veilings that endure affliction's heaviest shower,
 And do not shrink from sorrow's keenest wind.

XXXVI.

TO THE MEMORY OF RAISLEY CALVERT.

CALVERT ! it must not be unheard by them
 Who may respect my name, that I to thee
 Owed many years of early liberty.
 This care was thine when sickness did condemn
 Thy youth to hopeless wasting, root and stem—
 That I, if frugal and severe, might stray
 Where'er I liked ; and finally array
 My temples with the Muse's diadem.
 Hence, if in freedom I have loved the truth ;
 If there be aught of pure, or good, or great,
 In my past verse ; or shall be, in the lays
 Of higher mood, which now I meditate ;—
 It gladdens me, O worthy, short-lived, Youth !
 To think how much of this will be thy praise.

PART II.

I.

SCORN not the Sonnet ; Critic, you have frowned,
 Mindless of its just honours ; with this key
 Shakspeare unlocked his heart ; the melody
 Of this small lute gave ease to Petrarch's wound ;
 A thousand times this pipe did Tasso sound ;
 With it Camöens soothed an exile's grief ;
 The Sonnet glittered a gay myrtle leaf
 Amid the cypress with which Dante crowned
 His visionary brow : a glow-worm lamp,
 It cheered mild Spenser, called from Faery-land
 To struggle through dark ways ; and, when a damp
 Fell round the path of Milton, in his hand
 The Thing became a trumpet ; whence he blew
 Soul-animating strains—alas, too few !

II.

How sweet it is, when mother Fancy rocks
 The wayward brain, to saunter through a wood !
 An old place, full of many a lovely brood,
 Tall trees, green arbours, and ground-flowers in
 Flocks ;
 And wild rose tip-toe upon hawthorn stocks,
 Like a bold Girl, who plays her agile pranks
 At Wakes and Fairs with wandering Mountebanks,—
 When she stands cresting the Clown's head, and
 The crowd beneath her. Verily I think, [mocks
 Such place to me is sometimes like a dream
 Or map of the whole world : thoughts, link by link,
 Enter through ears and eyesight, with such gleam
 Of all things, that at last in fear I shrink,
 And leap at once from the delicious stream.

III.

TO B. R. HAYDON.

HIGH is our calling, Friend !—Creative Art
 (Whether the instrument of words she use,
 Or pencil pregnant with ethereal hues,
 Demands the service of a mind and heart,
 Though sensitive, yet, in their weakest part,
 Heroically fashioned—to infuse
 Faith in the whispers of the lonely Muse,
 While the whole world seems adverse to desert.
 And, oh ! when Nature sinks, as oft she may,
 Through long-lived pressure of obscure distress,
 Still to be strenuous for the bright reward,
 And in the soul admit of no decay,
 Brook no continuance of weak-mindedness—
 Great is the glory, for the strife is hard !

IV.

FROM the dark chambers of dejection freed,
 Spurning the unprofitable yoke of care,
 Rise, GILLIES, rise : the gales of youth shall bear
 Thy genius forward like a wingèd steed.
 Though bold Bellerophon (so Jove decreed
 In wrath) fell headlong from the fields of air,
 Yet a rich guerdon waits on minds that dare,
 If aught be in them of immortal seed,
 And reason govern that audacious flight
 Which heaven-ward they direct.—Then droop not
 thou,

Erroneously renewing a sad vow
 In the low dell 'mid Roslin's faded grove :
 A cheerful life is what the Muses love,
 A soaring spirit is their prime delight.

V.

FAIR Prime of life ! were it enough to gild
 With ready sunbeams every straggling shower ;
 And, if an unexpected cloud should lower,
 Swiftly thereon a rainbow arch to build
 For Fancy's errands,—then, from fields half-tilled
 Gathering green weeds to mix with poppy flower,
 Thee might thy Minions crown, and chant thy
 power,
 Unpitied by the wise, all censure stilled.
 Ah ! show that worthier honours are thy due ;
 Fair Prime of life ! arouse the deeper heart ;
 Confirm the Spirit glorying to pursue
 Some path of steep ascent and lofty aim ;
 And, if there be a joy that slights the claim
 Of grateful memory, bid that joy depart.

VI.

I WATCH, and long have watched, with calm regret
 Yon slowly-sinking star—immortal Sire
 (So might he seem) of all the glittering quire !
 Blue ether still surrounds him—yet—and yet ;
 But now the horizon's rocky parapet
 Is reached, where, forfeiting his bright attire,
 He burns—transmuted to a dusky fire—
 Then pays submissively the appointed debt
 To the flying moments, and is seen no more.
 Angels and gods ! We struggle with our fate,
 While health, power, glory, from their height
 decline,
 Depressed ; and then extinguished : and our state,
 In this, how different, lost Star, from thine,
 That no to-morrow shall our beams restore !

VII.

I HEARD (alas ! 't was only in a dream)
 Strains—which, as sage Antiquity believed,
 By waking ears have sometimes been received
 Wafted adown the wind from lake or stream ;
 A most melodious requiem, a supreme
 And perfect harmony of notes, achieved
 By a fair Swan on drowsy billows heaved,
 O'er which her pinions shed a silver gleam.
 For is she not the votary of Apollo ?
 And knows she not, singing as he inspires,
 That bliss awaits her which the ungenial Hollow*
 Of the dull earth partakes not, nor desires !
 Mount, tuneful Bird, and join the immortal quires
 She soared—and I awoke, struggling in vain to
 follow.

VIII.

RETIREMENT.

IF the whole weight of what we think and feel,
 Save only far as thought and feeling blend
 With action, were as nothing, patriot Friend !
 From thy remonstrance would be no appeal ;
 But to promote and fortify the weal
 Of our own Being is her paramount end ;
 A truth which they alone shall comprehend
 Who shun the mischief which they cannot heal.
 Peace in these feverish times is sovereign bliss :
 Here, with no thirst but what the stream can slake
 And startled only by the rustling brake,
 Cool air I breathe ; while the unincumbered Mind
 By some weak aims at services assigned
 To gentle Natures, thanks not Heaven amiss.

* See the Phædon of Plato, by which this Sonnet was suggested.

IX.

Love, not War, nor the tumultuous swell
 civil conflict, nor the wrecks of change,
 or Duty struggling with afflictions strange—
 at these *alone* inspire the tuneful shell ;
 at where untroubled peace and concord dwell,
 ere also is the Muse not loth to range,
 catching the twilight smoke of cot or grange,
 yward ascending from a woody dell.
 eek aspirations please her, lone endeavour,
 d sage content, and placid melancholy ;
 e loves to gaze upon a crystal river—
 ephanous because it travels slowly ;
 ft is the music that would charm for ever ;
 e flower of sweetest smell is shy and lowly.

X.

ARK the concentred hazels that enclose
 n old grey Stone, protected from the ray
 noon-tide suns:—and even the beams that play
 d glance, while wantonly the rough wind blows,
 e seldom free to touch the moss that grows
 on that roof, amid embowering gloom,
 e very image framing of a Tomb,
 which some ancient Chieftain finds repose
 among the lonely mountains.—Live, ye trees !
 d thou, grey Stone, the pensive likeness keep
 a dark chamber where the Mighty sleep :
 r more than Fancy to the influence bends
 hen solitary Nature condescends
 mimic Time's forlorn humanities.

XI.

COMPOSED AFTER A JOURNEY ACROSS THE HAMBLETON
 HILLS, YORKSHIRE.

ARK and more dark the shades of evening fell ;
 e wished-for point was reached—but at an hour
 en little could be gained from that rich dower
 prospect, whereof many thousands tell.
 t did the glowing west with marvellous power
 ute us ; there stood Indian citadel,
 mple of Greece, and minster with its tower
 ostantly expressed—a place for bell
 clock to toll from ! Many a tempting isle,
 th groves that never were imagined, lay
 id seas how steadfast ! objects all for the eye
 silent rapture ; but we felt the while
 e should forget them ; they are of the sky,
 d from our earthly memory fade away.

XII.

——— ' they are of the sky,
 And from our earthly memory fade away.'

THOSE words were uttered as in pensive mood
 We turned, departing from that solemn sight :
 A contrast and reproach to gross delight,
 And life's unspiritual pleasures daily wooed !
 But now upon this thought I cannot brood ;
 It is unstable as a dream of night ;
 Nor will I praise a cloud, however bright,
 Disparaging Man's gifts, and proper food.
 Grove, isle, with every shape of sky-built dome,
 Though clad in colours beautiful and pure,
 Find in the heart of man no natural home :
 The immortal Mind craves objects that endure :
 These cleave to it ; from these it cannot roam,
 Nor they from it : their fellowship is secure.

XIII.

SEPTEMBER, 1815.

WHILE not a leaf seems faded ; while the fields,
 With ripening harvest prodigally fair,
 In brightest sunshine bask ; this nipping air,
 Sent from some distant clime where Winter wields
 His icy scimitar, a foretaste yields
 Of bitter change, and bids the flowers beware ;
 And whispers to the silent birds, " Prepare
 Against the threatening foe your trustiest shields."
 For me, who under kindlier laws belong
 To Nature's tuneful quire, this rustling dry
 Through leaves yet green, and yon crystalline sky,
 Announce a season potent to renew,
 Mid frost and snow, the instinctive joys of song,
 And nobler cares than listless summer knew.

XIV.

NOVEMBER 1.

How clear, how keen, how marvellously bright
 The effluence from yon distant mountain's head,
 Which, strewn with snow smooth as the sky can
 shed,
 Shines like another sun—on mortal sight
 Uprisen, as if to check approaching Night,
 And all her twinkling stars. Who now would tread,
 If so he might, yon mountain's glittering head—
 Terrestrial, but a surface, by the flight
 Of sad mortality's earth-sully wing,
 Unswept, unstained ? Nor shall the ærial Powers
 Dissolve that beauty, destined to endure,
 White, radiant, spotless, exquisitely pure,
 Through all vicissitudes, till genial Spring
 Has filled the laughing vales with welcome flowers.

XV.

COMPOSED DURING A STORM.

ONE who was suffering tumult in his soul
 Yet failed to seek the sure relief of prayer,
 Went forth—his course surrendering to the care
 Of the fierce wind, while mid-day lightnings prowled
 Insidiously, untimely thunders growled;
 While trees, dim-seen, in frenzied numbers, tear
 The lingering remnant of their yellow hair,
 And shivering wolves, surprised with darkness, howl
 As if the sun were not. He raised his eye
 Soul-smitten; for, that instant, did appear
 Large space (mid dreadful clouds) of purest sky,
 An azure disc—shield of Tranquillity;
 Invisible, unlooked-for, minister
 Of providential goodness ever nigh!

XVI.

TO A SNOW-DROP.

LONE Flower, hemmed in with snows and white as
 But hardier far, once more I see thee bend [they
 Thy forehead, as if fearful to offend,
 Like an unbidden guest. Though day by day,
 Storms, sallying from the mountain-tops, way-lay
 The rising sun, and on the plains descend;
 Yet art thou welcome, welcome as a friend
 Whose zeal outruns his promise! Blue-eyed May
 Shall soon behold this border thickly set
 With bright jonquils, their odours lavishing
 On the soft west-wind and his frolic peers;
 Nor will I then thy modest grace forget,
 Chaste Snow-drop, venturous harbinger of Spring,
 And pensive monitor of fleeting years!

XVII.

TO THE LADY MARY LOWTHER.

With a selection from the Poems of Anne, Countess of Winchilsea;
 and extracts of similar character from other Writers; transcribed
 by a female friend.

LADY! I rifled a Parnassian Cave
 (But seldom trod) of mildly-gleaming ore;
 And culled, from sundry beds, a lucid store
 Of genuine crystals, pure as those that pave
 The azure brooks, where Dian joys to lave
 Her spotless limbs; and ventured to explore
 Dim shades—for reliques, upon Lethe's shore,
 Cast up at random by the sullen wave,
 To female hands the treasures were resigned;
 And lo this Work!—a grotto bright and clear
 From stain or taint; in which thy blameless mind
 May feed on thoughts though pensive not austere;
 Or, if thy deeper spirit be inclined
 To holy musing, it may enter here.

XVIII.

TO LADY BEAUMONT.

LADY! the songs of Spring were in the grove
 While I was shaping beds for winter flowers;
 While I was planting green unfading bowers,
 And shrubs—to hang upon the warm alcove,
 And sheltering wall; and still, as Fancy wove
 The dream, to time and nature's blended powers
 I gave this paradise for winter hours,
 A labyrinth, Lady! which your feet shall rove.
 Yes! when the sun of life more feebly shines,
 Becoming thoughts, I trust, of solemn gloom
 Or of high gladness you shall hither bring;
 And these perennial bowers and murmuring pines
 Be gracious as the music and the bloom
 And all the mighty ravishment of spring.

XIX.

*THERE is a pleasure in poetic pains
 Which only Poets know;—'t was rightly said;
 Whom could the Muses else allure to tread
 Their smoothest paths, to wear their lightest chains!
 When happiest Fancy has inspired the strains,
 How oft the malice of one luckless word
 Pursues the Enthusiast to the social board,
 Haunts him belated on the silent plains!
 Yet he repines not, if his thought stand clear,
 At last, of hindrance and obscurity,
 Fresh as the star that crowns the brow of morn;
 Bright, speckless, as a softly-moulded tear
 The moment it has left the virgin's eye,
 Or rain-drop lingering on the pointed thorn.*

XX.

THE Shepherd, looking eastward, softly said,
 "Bright is thy veil, O Moon, as thou art bright!"
 Forthwith, that little cloud, in ether spread
 And penetrated all with tender light,
 She cast away, and showed her fulgent head
 Uncovered; dazzling the Beholder's sight
 As if to vindicate her beauty's right,
 Her beauty thoughtlessly disparaged.
 Meanwhile that veil, removed or thrown aside,
 Went floating from her, darkening as it went;
 And a huge mass, to bury or to hide,
 Approached this glory of the firmament;
 Who meekly yields, and is obscured—content
 With one calm triumph of a modest pride.

XXI.

WHEN haughty expectations prostrate lie,
 And grandeur crouches like a guilty thing,
 Shall the lowly weak, till nature bring
 Nature release, in fair society
 Survive, and Fortune's utmost anger try;
 Like these frail snow-drops that together cling,
 And nod their helmets, smitten by the wing
 Of many a furious whirl-blast sweeping by.
 To serve the faithful flowers! if small to great
 They lead the thoughts, thus struggling used to stand
 By the Emathian phalanx, nobly obstinate;
 And so the bright immortal Theban band,
 From onset, fiercely urged at Jove's command.
 Might overwhelm, but could not separate!

XXII.

THU, Twilight, sovereign of one peaceful hour!
 Not dull art Thou as undiscerning Night;
 Not studious only to remove from sight
 Thy's mutable distinctions.—Ancient Power!
 Thus did the waters gleam, the mountains lower,
 And the rude Briton, when, in wolf-skin vest
 He roving wild, he laid him down to rest
 On the bare rock, or through a leafy bower
 Looked ere his eyes were closed. By him was seen
 The self-same Vision which we now behold,
 Thy meek bidding, shadowy Power! brought
 forth;
 These mighty barriers, and the gulf between;
 The flood, the stars,—a spectacle as old
 As the beginning of the heavens and earth!

XXIII.

THU how sad steps, O Moon, thou climb'st the sky,
 How silently, and with how wan a face!
 Where art thou? Thou so often seen on high
 Gliding among the clouds a Wood-nymph's race!
 Unhappy Nuns, whose common breath's a sigh
 Which they would stifle, move at such a pace!
 The northern Wind, to call thee to the chase,
 Must blow to-night his bugle horn. Had I
 The power of Merlin, Goddess! this should be:
 All all the stars, fast as the clouds were riven,
 Should sally forth, to keep thee company,
 Flitting and sparkling through the clear blue
 heaven;
 O Cynthia! should to thee the palm be given,
 Given both for beauty and for majesty.

XXIV.

EVEN as a dragon's eye that feels the stress
 Of a bedimmed sleep, or as a lamp
 Suddenly glaring through sepulchral damp,
 So burns yon Taper 'mid a black recess
 Of mountains, silent, dreary, motionless:
 The lake below reflects it not; the sky
 Muffled in clouds, affords no company
 To mitigate and cheer its loneliness.
 Yet, round the body of that joyless Thing
 Which sends so far its melancholy light,
 Perhaps are seated in domestic ring
 A gay society with faces bright,
 Conversing, reading, laughing;—or they sing,
 While hearts and voices in the song unite.

XXV.

THE stars are mansions built by Nature's hand,
 And, haply, there the spirits of the blest
 Dwell, clothed in radiance, their immortal vest;
 Huge Ocean shows, within his yellow strand,
 A habitation marvellously planned,
 For life to occupy in love and rest;
 All that we see—is dome, or vault, or nest,
 Or fortress, reared at Nature's sage command.
 Glad thought for every season! but the Spring
 Gave it while cares were weighing on my heart,
 'Mid song of birds, and insects murmuring;
 And while the youthful year's prolific art—
 Of bud, leaf, blade, and flower—was fashioning
 Abodes where self-disturbance hath no part.

XXVI.

DESponding Father! mark this altered bough,
 So beautiful of late, with sunshine warmed,
 Or moist with dews; what more unsightly now,
 Its blossoms shrivelled, and its fruit, if formed,
 Invisible? yet Spring her genial brow
 Knits not o'er that discolouring and decay
 As false to expectation. Nor fret thou
 At like unlovely process in the May
 Of human life: a Stripling's graces blow,
 Fade and are shed, that from their timely fall
 (Misdemean it not a cankerous change) may grow
 Rich mellow bearings, that for thanks shall call:
 In all men, sinful is it to be slow
 To hope—in Parents, sinful above all.

XXVII.

CAPTIVITY.—MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS.

“As the cold aspect of a sunless way
Strikes through the Traveller's frame with deadlier
chill,
Oft as appears a grove, or obvious hill,
Glistening with unparticipated ray,
Or shining slope where he must never stray ;
So joys, remembered without wish or will,
Sharpen the keenest edge of present ill,—
On the crushed heart a heavier burthen lay.
Just Heaven, contract the compass of my mind
To fit proportion with my altered state !
Quench those felicities whose light I find
Reflected in my bosom all too late !—
O be my spirit, like my thralldom, strait ;
And, like mine eyes that stream with sorrow, blind !”

XXVIII.

ST. CATHERINE OF LEDBURY.

WHEN human touch (as monkish books attest)
Nor was applied nor could be, Ledbury bells
Broke forth in concert flung adown the dells,
And upward, high as Malvern's cloudy crest ;
Sweet tones, and caught by a noble Lady blest
To rapture ! Mabel listened at the side
Of her loved mistress : soon the music died,
And Catherine said, *Here I set up my rest.*
Warned in a dream, the Wanderer long had sought
A home that by such miracle of sound
Must be revealed :—she heard it now, or felt
The deep, deep joy of a confiding thought ;
And there, a saintly anchoress, she dwelt
Till she exchanged for heaven that happy ground.

XXIX.

——— ‘gives to airy nothing
A local habitation and a name.’

THOUGH narrow be that old Man's cares, and near,
The poor old Man is greater than he seems :
For he hath waking empire, wide as dreams ;
An ample sovereignty of eye and ear.
Rich are his walks with supernatural cheer ;
The region of his inner spirit teems
With vital sounds and monitory gleams
Of high astonishment and pleasing fear.
He the seven birds hath seen, that never part,
Seen the SEVEN WHISTLERS in their nightly rounds,
And counted them : and oftentimes will start—
For overhead are sweeping GABRIEL'S HOUNDS
Doomed, with their impious Lord, the flying Hart
To chase for ever, on ærial grounds !

XXX.

FOUR fiery steeds impatient of the rein
Whirled us o'er sunless ground beneath a sky
As void of sunshine, when, from that wide plain,
Clear tops of far-off mountains we descried,
Like a Sierra of cerulean Spain,
All light and lustre. Did no heart reply ?
Yes, there was One ;—for One, asunder fly
The thousand links of that ethereal chain ;
And green vales open out, with grove and field,
And the fair front of many a happy Home ;
Such tempting spots as into vision come
While Soldiers, weary of the arms they wield
And sick at heart of strife and Christendom,
Gaze on the moon by parting clouds revealed.

XXXI.

BROOK ! whose society the Poet seeks,
Intent his wasted spirits to renew ;
And whom the curious Painter doth pursue
Through rocky passes, among flowery creeks,
And tracks thee dancing down thy water-breaks ;
If wish were mine some type of thee to view,
Thee, and not thee thyself, I would not do
Like Grecian Artists, give thee human cheeks,
Channels for tears ; no Naiad should'st thou be,—
Have neither limbs, feet, feathers, joints nor hairs
It seems the Eternal Soul is clothed in thee
With purer robes than those of flesh and blood,
And hath bestowed on thee a safer good ;
Unwearied joy, and life without its cares.

XXXII.

COMPOSED ON THE BANKS OF A ROCKY STREAM.

DOGMATIC Teachers, of the snow-white fur !
Ye wrangling Schoolmen, of the scarlet hood !
Who, with a keenness not to be withstood,
Press the point home, or falter and demur,
Checked in your course by many a teasing burr ;
These natural council-seats your acrid blood
Might cool ;—and, as the Genius of the flood
Stoops willingly to animate and spur
Each lighter function slumbering in the brain,
Yon eddying balls of foam, these arrowy gleams
That o'er the pavement of the surging streams
Welter and flash, a synod might detain
With subtle speculations, haply vain,
But surely less so than your far-fetched themes !

XXXIII.

HIS, AND THE TWO FOLLOWING, WERE SUGGESTED
BY MR. W. WESTALL'S VIEWS OF THE CAVES, ETC.
IN YORKSHIRE.

PURE element of waters ! wheresoe'er
Thou dost forsake thy subterranean haunts,
Green herbs, bright flowers, and berry-bearing
plants,

Rise into life and in thy train appear :
And, through the sunny portion of the year,
Swift insects shine, thy hovering pursuivants :
And, if thy bounty fail, the forest pants ;
And hart and hind and hunter with his spear,
Languish and droop together. Nor unfelt
A man's perturbèd soul thy sway benign ;
And, haply, far within the marble belt
Of central earth, where tortured Spirits pine
For grace and goodness lost, thy murmurs melt
Their anguish,—and they blend sweet songs with
thine.*

XXXIV.

MALHAM COVE.

WAS the aim frustrated by force or guile,
When giants scooped from out the rocky ground,
Nearer under tier, this semicirque profound ?
Giants—the same who built in Erin's isle
That Causeway with incomparable toil !—
Had this vast theatric structure wound
With finished sweep into a perfect round,
No mightier work had gained the plausible smile
Of all-beholding Phœbus ! But, alas,
Fair earth ! false world ! Foundations must be laid
In Heaven ; for, 'mid the wreck of is and was,
Things incomplete and purposes betrayed
Take sadder transits o'er thought's optic glass
Than noblest objects utterly decayed.

XXXV.

GORDALE.

Early dawn, or rather when the air
Immures with fading light, and shadowy Eve
Busiest to confer and to bereave ;
Then, pensive Votary ! let thy feet repair
To Gordale-chasm, terrific as the lair
Where the young lions couch ; for so, by leave

Of the propitious hour, thou may'st perceive
The local Deity, with oozy hair
And mineral crown, beside his jagged urn,
Recumbent : Him thou may'st behold, who hides
His lineaments by day, yet there presides,
Teaching the docile waters how to turn,
Or (if need be) impediment to spurn,
And force their passage to the salt-sea tides !

XXXVI.

COMPOSED UPON WESTMINSTER BRIDGE, SEPT. 3, 1802.

EARTH has not any thing to show more fair :
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
A sight so touching in its majesty :
This City now doth, like a garment, wear
The beauty of the morning ; silent, bare,
Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
Open unto the fields, and to the sky ;
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.
Never did sun more beautifully steep
In his first splendour, valley, rock, or hill ;
Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep !
The river glideth at his own sweet will :
Dear God ! the very houses seem asleep ;
And all that mighty heart is lying still !

XXXVII.

CONCLUSION.

TO —

IF these brief Records, by the Muses' art
Produced as lonely Nature or the strife
That animates the scenes of public life *
Inspired, may in thy leisure claim a part ;
And if these Transcripts of the private heart
Have gained a sanction from thy falling tears ;
Then I repent not. But my soul hath fears
Breathed from eternity ; for as a dart
Cleaves the blank air, Life flies : now every day
Is but a glimmering spoke in the swift wheel
Of the revolving week. Away, away,
All fitful cares, all transitory zeal !
So timely Grace the immortal wing may heal,
And honour rest upon the senseless clay.

* This line alludes to Sonnets which will be found in
another Class.

* Waters (as Mr. Westall informs us in the letter-press
affixed to his admirable views) are invariably found to
flow through these caverns.

PART III.

I.

THOUGH the bold wings of Poesy affect
The clouds, and wheel around the mountain tops
Rejoicing, from her loftiest height she drops
Well pleased to skim the plain with wild flowers
deckt,

Or muse in solemn grove whose shades protect
The lingering dew—there steals along, or stops
Watching the least small bird that round her hops,
Or creeping worm, with sensitive respect.
Her functions are they therefore less divine,
Her thoughts less deep, or void of grave intent
Her simplest fancies? Should that fear be thine,
Aspiring Votary, ere thy hand present
One offering, kneel before her modest shrine,
With brow in penitential sorrow bent!

II.

OXFORD, MAY 30, 1820.

YE sacred Nurseries of blooming Youth!
In whose collegiate shelter England's Flowers
Expand, enjoying through their vernal hours
The air of liberty, the light of truth;
Much have ye suffered from Time's gnawing tooth:
Yet, O ye spires of Oxford! domes and towers!
Gardens and groves! your presence overpowers
The soberness of reason; till, in sooth,
Transformed, and rushing on a bold exchange,
I slight my own beloved Cam, to range
Where silver Isis leads my stripling feet;
Pace the long avenue, or glide adown
The stream-like windings of that glorious street—
An eager Novice robed in fluttering gown!

III.

OXFORD, MAY 30, 1820.

SHAME on this faithless heart! that could allow
Such transport, though but for a moment's space;
Not while—to aid the spirit of the place—
The crescent moon clove with its glittering prow
The clouds, or night-bird sang from shady bough;
But in plain daylight:—She, too, at my side,
Who, with her heart's experience satisfied,
Maintains inviolate its slightest vow!
Sweet Fancy! other gifts must I receive;
Proofs of a higher sovereignty I claim;
Take from *her* brow the withering flowers of eve,
And to that brow life's morning wreath restore;
Let *her* be comprehended in the frame
Of these illusions, or they please no more.

IV.

RECOLLECTION OF THE PORTRAIT OF KING HENRY
EIGHTH, TRINITY LODGE, CAMBRIDGE.

THE imperial Stature, the colossal stride,
Are yet before me; yet do I behold
The broad full visage, chest of amplest mould,
The vestments 'broidered with barbaric pride:
And lo! a poniard, at the Monarch's side,
Hangs ready to be grasped in sympathy
With the keen threatenings of that fulgent eye,
Below the white-rimmed bonnet, far-described.
Who trembles now at thy capricious mood!
'Mid those surrounding Worthies, haughty King,
We rather think, with grateful mind sedate,
How Providence educeth, from the spring
Of lawless will, unlooked-for streams of good,
Which neither force shall check nor time abate!

V.

ON THE DEATH OF HIS MAJESTY (GEORGE THE THIRD).

WARD of the LAW!—dread Shadow of a King!
Whose realm had dwindled to one stately room;
Whose universe was gloom immersed in gloom,
Darkness as thick as life o'er life could fling,
Save haply for some feeble glimmering
Of Faith and Hope—if thou, by nature's doom,
Gently hast sunk into the quiet tomb,
Why should we bend in grief, to sorrow cling,
When thankfulness were best?—Fresh-flowing tears,
Or, where tears flow not, sigh succeeding sigh,
Yield to such after-thought the sole reply
Which justly it can claim. The Nation hears
In this deep knell, silent for threescore years,
An unexampled voice of awful memory!

VI.

JUNE, 1820.

FAME tells of groves—from England far away—
* Groves that inspire the Nightingale to trill
And modulate, with subtle reach of skill
Elsewhere unmatched, her ever-varying lay;
Such bold report I venture to gainsay:
For I have heard the quire of Richmond hill
Chanting, with indefatigable bill,
Strains that recalled to mind a distant day;
When, haply under shade of that same wood,
And scarcely conscious of the dashing oars
Plied steadily between those willowy shores,
The sweet-souled Poet of the Seasons stood—
Listening, and listening long, in rapturous mood,
Ye heavenly Birds! to your Progenitors.

* Wallachia is the country alluded to.

VII.

A PARSONAGE IN OXFORDSHIRE.

WHERE holy ground begins, unhallowed ends,
 Is marked by no distinguishable line;
 The turf unites, the pathways intertwine;
 And, wheresoe'er the stealing footstep tends,
 Garden, and that Domain where kindred, friends,
 And neighbours rest together, here confound
 Their several features, mingled like the sound
 Of many waters, or as evening blends
 With shady night. Soft airs, from shrub and flower,
 Vaft fragrant greetings to each silent grave;
 And while those lofty poplars gently wave
 Their tops, between them comes and goes a sky
 Bright as the glimpses of eternity,
 To saints accorded in their mortal hour.

VIII.

COMPOSED AMONG THE RUINS OF A CASTLE IN NORTH WALES.

THROUGH shattered galleries, 'mid roofless halls,
 Wandering with timid footsteps oft betrayed,
 The Stranger sighs, nor scruples to upbraid
 Old Time, though he, gentlest among the Thralls
 Of Destiny, upon these wounds hath laid
 His lenient touches, soft as light that falls,
 From the wan Moon, upon the towers and walls,
 Light deepening the profoundest sleep of shade.
 Oelic of Kings! Wreck of forgotten wars,
 O winds abandoned and the prying stars,
 Time loves Thee! at his call the Seasons twine
 Luxuriant wreaths around thy forehead hoar;
 And, though past pomp no changes can restore,
 Soothing recompence, his gift, is thine!

IX.

TO THE LADY E. B. AND THE HON. MISS P.

Composed in the Grounds of Plass Newidd, near Llangollen, 1824.

STREAM, to mingle with your favourite Dee,
 Along the VALE OF MEDITATION * flows;
 O styled by those fierce Britons, pleased to see
 In Nature's face the expression of repose;
 Or haply there some pious hermit chose
 To live and die, the peace of heaven his aim;
 O whom the wild sequestered region owes,
 At this late day, its sanctifying name.
 Glyn Cafailgaroch, in the Cambrian tongue,
 Ours, the VALE OF FRIENDSHIP, let *this* spot
 Be named; where, faithful to a low-roofed Cot,
 In Deva's banks, ye have abode so long;
 Masters in love, a love allowed to climb,
 Even on this earth, above the reach of Time!

* Glyn Myrvr.

X.

TO THE TORRENT AT THE DEVIL'S BRIDGE, NORTH WALES 1824.

How art thou named? In search of what strangeland
 From what huge height, descending? Can such force
 Of waters issue from a British source,
 Or hath not Pindus fed thee, where the band
 Of Patriots scoop their freedom out, with hand
 Desperate as thine? Or come the incessant shocks
 From that young Stream, that smites the throbbing
 rocks
 Of Viamala? There I seem to stand,
 As in life's morn; permitted to behold,
 From the dread chasm, woods climbing above woods,
 In pomp that fades not; everlasting snows;
 And skies that ne'er relinquish their repose;
 Such power possess the family of floods
 Over the minds of Poets, young or old!

XI.

IN THE WOODS OF RYDAL.

WILD Redbreast! hadst thou at Jemima's lip
 Pecked, as at mine, thus boldly, Love might say,
 A half-blown rose had tempted thee to sip
 Its glistening dew; but hallowed is the clay
 Which the Muse warms; and I, whose head is grey,
 Am not unworthy of thy fellowship;
 Nor could I let one thought—one motion—slip
 That might thy sylvan confidence betray.
 For are we not all His without whose care
 Vouchsafed no sparrow falleth to the ground?
 Who gives his Angels wings to speed through air,
 And rolls the planets through the blue profound;
 Then peck or perch, fond Flutterer! nor forbear
 To trust a Poet in still musings bound.

XII.

WHEN Philoctetes in the Lemnian isle
 Like a Form sculptured on a monument
 Lay couched; on him or his dread bow unbent
 Some wild Bird oft might settle and beguile
 The rigid features of a transient smile,
 Disperse the tear, or to the sigh give vent,
 Slackening the pains of ruthless banishment
 From his lov'd home, and from heroic toil.
 And trust that spiritual Creatures round us move,
 Grievs to allay which Reason cannot heal;
 Yea, veriest reptiles have sufficed to prove
 To fettered wretchedness, that no Bastile
 Is deep enough to exclude the light of love,
 Though man for brother man has ceased to feel.

XIII.

WHILE Anna's peers and early playmates tread,
In freedom, mountain-turf and river's marge ;
Or float with music in the festal barge ;
Rein the proud steed, or through the dance are led ;
Her doom it is to press a weary bed—
Till oft her guardian Angel, to some charge
More urgent called, will stretch his wings at large,
And friends too rarely prop the languid head.
Yet, helped by Genius—untired comforter,
The presence even of a stuffed Owl for her
Can cheat the time ; sending her fancy out
To ivied castles and to moonlight skies,
Though he can neither stir a plume, nor shout ;
Nor veil, with restless film, his staring eyes.

XIV.

TO THE CUCKOO.

Nor the whole warbling grove in concert heard
When sunshine follows shower, the breast can thrill
Like the first summons, Cuckoo ! of thy bill,
With its twin notes inseparably paired.
The captive 'mid damp vaults unsunned, unaired,
Measuring the periods of his lonely doom,
That cry can reach ; and to the sick man's room
Sends gladness, by no languid smile declared.
The lordly eagle-race through hostile search
May perish ; time may come when never more
The wilderness shall hear the lion roar ;
But, long as cock shall crow from household perch
To rouse the dawn, soft gales shall speed thy wing,
And thy erratic voice be faithful to the Spring !

XV.

TO ———

[Miss not the occasion : by the forelock take
That subtle Power, the never-halting Time,
Lest a mere moment's putting-off should make
Mischance almost as heavy as a crime.]

“ WAIT, prithee, wait ! ” this answer Lesbia threw
Forth to her Dove, and took no further heed.
Her eye was busy, while her fingers flew
Across the harp, with soul engrossing speed ;
But from that bondage when her thoughts were freed
She rose, and toward the close-shut casement drew,
Whence the poor unregarded Favourite, true
To old affections, had been heard to plead
With flapping wing for entrance. What a shriek
Forced from that voice so lately tuned to a strain
Of harmony !—a shriek of terror, pain,
And self-reproach ! for, from aloft, a Kite [beak
Pounced,—and the Dove, which from its ruthless
She could not rescue, perished in her sight !

XVI.

THE INFANT M—— M——.

UNQUIET Childhood here by special grace
Forgets her nature, opening like a flower
That neither feeds nor wastes its vital power
In painful struggles. Months each other chase,
And nought untunes that Infant's voice ; no trace
Of fretful temper sullies her pure cheek ;
Prompt, lively, self-sufficing, yet so meek
That one enrapt with gazing on her face
(Which even the placid innocence of death
Could scarcely make more placid, heaven more
bright)

Might learn to picture, for the eye of faith,
The Virgin, as she shone with kindred light ;
A nursling couched upon her mother's knee,
Beneath some shady palm of Galilee.

XVII.

TO ———, IN HER SEVENTIETH YEAR.

SUCH age how beautiful ! O Lady bright,
Whose mortal lineaments seem all refined
By favouring Nature and a saintly Mind
To something purer and more exquisite [sight,
Than flesh and blood ; whene'er thou meet'st my
When I behold thy blanched unwithered cheek,
Thy temples fringed with locks of gleaming white,
And head that droops because the soul is meek,
Thee with the welcome Snowdrop I compare ;
That child of winter, prompting thoughts that climb
From desolation toward the genial prime ;
Or with the Moon conquering earth's misty air,
And filling more and more with crystal light
As pensive Evening deepens into night.

XVIII.

TO ROTH A Q——.

ROTHA, my Spiritual Child ! this head was grey
When at the sacred font for thee I stood ;
Pledged till thou reach the verge of womanhood,
And shalt become thy own sufficient stay :
Too late, I feel, sweet Orphan ! was the day
For steadfast hope the contract to fulfil ;
Yet shall my blessing hover o'er thee still,
Embodied in the music of this Lay, [Stream
Breathed forth beside the peaceful mountain
Whose murmur soothed thy languid Mother's ear
After her throes, this Stream of name more dear
Since thou dost bear it,—a memorial theme
For others ; for thy future self, a spell
To summon fancies out of Time's dark cell.

* The river Rotha, that flows into Windermere from the
Lakes of Grasmere and Rydal.

XIX.

GRAVE-STONE UPON THE FLOOR IN THE CLOISTERS
OF WORCESTER CATHEDRAL.

Miserrimus!" and neither name nor date,
Prayer, text, or symbol, graven upon the stone;
Fought but that word assigned to the unknown,
That solitary word—to separate
From all, and cast a cloud around the fate
Of him who lies beneath. Most wretched one,
Who chose his epitaph?—Himself alone
Could thus have dared the grave to agitate,
And claim, among the dead, this awful crown;
For doubt that He marked also for his own
Lose to these cloistral steps a burial-place,
That every foot might fall with heavier tread,
Trampling upon his vileness. Stranger, pass
Softly!—To save the contrite, Jesus bled.

XX.

ROMAN ANTIQUITIES DISCOVERED AT BISHOPSTONE,
HEREFORDSHIRE.

While poring Antiquarians search the ground
Perturbed with curious pains, the Bard, a Seer,
Aakes fire:—The men that have been reappear;
Romans for travel girt, for business gowned;
And some recline on couches, myrtle-crowned,
In festal glee: why not? For fresh and clear,
As if its hues were of the passing year,
Lawns this time-buried pavement. From that mound
Boards may come forth of Trajans, Maximins,
Crunk into coins with all their warlike toil:
Or a fierce impress issues with its foil
Of tenderness—the Wolf, whose suckling Twins
The unlettered ploughboy pities when he wins
The casual treasure from the furrowed soil.

XXI.

1830.

HATSWORTH! thy stately mansion, and the pride
Of thy domain, strange contrast do present
To house and home in many a craggy rent
Of the wild Peak; where new-born waters glide
Through fields whose thrifty occupants abide
As in a dear and chosen banishment,
With every semblance of entire content;
So kind is simple Nature, fairly tried!
Yet He whose heart in childhood gave her troth
To pastoral dales, thin-set with modest farms,
May learn, if judgment strengthen with his growth,
That, not for Fancy only, pomp hath charms;
And, strenuous to protect from lawless harms
The extremes of favoured life, may honour both.

XXII.

A TRADITION OF OKER HILL IN DARLEY DALE,
DERBYSHIRE.

'Tis said that to the brow of yon fair hill
Two Brothers clomb, and, turning face from face,
Nor one look more exchanging, grief to still
Or feed, each planted on that lofty place
A chosen Tree; then, eager to fulfil
Their courses, like two new-born rivers, they
In opposite directions urged their way
Down from the far-seen mount. No blast might kill
Or blight that fond memorial;—the trees grew,
And now entwine their arms; but ne'er again
Embraced those Brothers upon earth's wide plain;
Nor aught of mutual joy or sorrow knew
Until their spirits mingled in the sea
That to itself takes all, Eternity.

XXIII.

FILIAL PIETY.

(ON THE WAYSIDE BETWEEN PRESTON AND LIVERPOOL.)

Untouched through all severity of cold;
Inviolatè, whate'er the cottage hearth
Might need for comfort, or for festal mirth;
That Pile of Turf is half a century old:
Yes, Traveller! fifty winters have been told
Since suddenly the dart of death went forth
'Gainst him who raised it,—his last work on earth:
Thence has it, with the Son, so strong a hold
Upon his Father's memory, that his hands,
Through reverence, touch it only to repair
Its waste.—Though crumbling with each breath of air,
In annual renovation thus it stands—
Rude Mausoleum! but wrens nestle there,
And red-breasts warble when sweet sounds are rare.

XXIV.

TO THE AUTHOR'S PORTRAIT.

[Painted at Rydal Mount, by W. Pickersgill, Esq., for St. John's
College, Cambridge.]

Go, faithful Portrait! and where long hath knelt
Margaret, the saintly Foundress, take thy place;
And, if Time spare the colours for the grace
Which to the work surpassing skill hath dealt,
Thou, on thy rock reclined, though kingdoms melt
And states be torn up by the roots, wilt seem
To breathe in rural peace, to hear the stream,
And think and feel as once the Poet felt.
Whate'er thy fate, those features have not grown
Unrecognised through many a household tear
More prompt, more glad, to fall than drops of dew
By morning shed around a flower half-blown;
Tears of delight, that testified how true
To life thou art, and, in thy truth, how dear!

XXV.

WHY art thou silent! Is thy love a plant
Of such weak fibre that the treacherous air
Of absence withers what was once so fair?
Is there no debt to pay, no boon to grant?
Yet have my thoughts for thee been vigilant—
Bound to thy service with unceasing care,
The mind's least generous wish a mendicant
For nought but what thy happiness could spare.
Speak—though this soft warm heart, once free to
hold

A thousand tender pleasures, thine and mine,
Be left more desolate, more dreary cold
Than a forsaken bird's-nest filled with snow
'Mid its own bush of leafless eglantine—
Speak, that my torturing doubts their end may know!

XXVI.

TO B. R. HAYDON, ON SEEING HIS PICTURE OF NAPOLEON BUONAPARTE ON THE ISLAND OF ST. HELENA.

HAYDON! let worthier judges praise the skill
Here by thy pencil shown in truth of lines
And charm of colours; *I* applaud those signs
Of thought, that give the true poetic thrill;
That unencumbered whole of blank and still,
Sky without cloud—ocean without a wave;
And the one Man that laboured to enslave
The World, sole-standing high on the bare hill—
Back turned, arms folded, the unapparent face
Tinged, we may fancy, in this dreary place
With light reflected from the invisible sun
Set, like his fortunes; but not set for aye
Like them. The unguilty Power pursues his way,
And before *him* doth dawn perpetual run.

XXVII.

A Poet!—He hath put his heart to school,
Nor dares to move unroped upon the staff
Which Art hath lodged within his hand—must laugh
By precept only, and shed tears by rule.
Thy Art be Nature; the live current quaff,
And let the groveller sip his stagnant pool,
In fear that else, when Critics grave and cool
Have killed him, Scorn should write his epitaph.
How does the Meadow-flower its bloom unfold?
Because the lovely little flower is free
Down to its root, and, in that freedom, bold;
And so the grandeur of the Forest-tree
Comes not by casting in a formal mould,
But from its *own* divine vitality.

XXVIII.

THE most alluring clouds that mount the sky
Owe to a troubled element their forms,
Their hues to sunset. If with raptured eye
We watch their splendor, shall we covet storms,
And wish the Lord of day his slow decline
Would hasten, that such pomp may float on high!
Behold, already they forget to shine,
Dissolve—and leave to him who gazed a sigh.
Not loth to thank each moment for its boon
Of pure delight, come whencesoe'er it may,
Peace let us seek,—to stedfast things attune
Calm expectations, leaving to the gay
And volatile their love of transient bowers,
The house that cannot pass away be ours.

XXIX.

ON A PORTRAIT OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON
UPON THE FIELD OF WATERLOO, BY HAYDON.

By Art's bold privilege Warrior and War-horse
stand

On ground yet strewn with their last battle's wreck;
Let the Steed glory while his Master's hand
Lies fixed for ages on his conscious neck;
But by the Chieftain's look, though at his side
Hangs that day's treasured sword, how firm a check
Is given to triumph and all human pride!
Yon trophied Mound shrinks to a shadowy speck
In his calm presence! Him the mighty deed
Elates not, brought far nearer the grave's rest,
As shows that time-worn face, for he such seed
Has sown as yields, we trust, the fruit of fame
In Heaven; hence no one blushes for thy name,
Conqueror, mid some sad thoughts, divinely blest!

XXX.

COMPOSED ON A MAY MORNING, 1838.

LIFE with yon Lambs, like day, is just begun,
Yet Nature seems to them a heavenly guide.
Does joy approach? they meet the coming tide;
And sullenness avoid, as now they shun
Pale twilight's lingering glooms,—and in the sun
Couch near their dams, with quiet satisfied;
Or gambol—each with his shadow at his side,
Varying its shape wherever he may run.
As they from turf yet hoar with sleepy dew
All turn, and court the shining and the green,
Where herbs look up, and opening flowers are seen;
Why to God's goodness cannot We be true,
And so, His gifts and promises between,
Feed to the last on pleasures ever new?

XXXI.

O! where she stands fixed in a saint-like trance,
 In the upward hand, as if she needed rest
 From rapture, lying softly on her breast!
 Or wants her eyeball an ethereal glance;
 At not the less—nay more—that countenance,
 While thus illumined, tells of painful strife
 Or a sick heart made weary of this life
 By love, long crossed with adverse circumstance.
 Would She were now as when she hoped to pass
 God's appointed hour to them who tread
 Heaven's sapphire pavement, yet breathed well
 Content,
 Well pleased, her foot should print earth's common
 Grass,
 And be thankful for day's light, for daily bread,
 For health, and time in obvious duty spent.

XXXII.

TO A PAINTER.

ALL praise the Likeness by thy skill portrayed;
 But 'tis a fruitless task to paint for me,
 Who, yielding not to changes Time has made,
 By the habitual light of memory see
 Things unbedimmed, see bloom that cannot fade,
 And smiles that from their birth-place ne'er shall flee
 To the land where ghosts and phantoms be;
 And, seeing this, own nothing in its stead.
 Couldst thou go back into far-distant years,
 To share with me, fond thought! that inward eye,
 Then, and then only, Painter! could thy Art
 The visual powers of Nature satisfy,
 Which hold, whate'er to common sight appears,
 Their sovereign empire in a faithful heart.

XXXIII.

ON THE SAME SUBJECT.

THOUGH I beheld at first with blank surprise
 Thy Work, I now have gazed on it so long
 I see its truth with unreluctant eyes;
 My Beloved! I have done thee wrong,
 Unconscious of blessedness, but, whence it sprung,
 Ever too heedless, as I now perceive:
 From noon into noon did pass, noon into eve,
 And the old day was welcome as the young,
 As welcome, and as beautiful—in sooth
 More beautiful, as being a thing more holy:
 Thanks to thy virtues, to the eternal youth
 Of all thy goodness, never melancholy;
 To thy large heart and humble mind, that cast
 To one vision, future, present, past.

XXXIV.

HARK! 'tis the Thrush, undaunted, undeprest,
 By twilight premature of cloud and rain;
 Nor does that roaring wind deaden his strain
 Who carols thinking of his Love and nest,
 And seems, as more incited, still more blest.
 Thanks; thou hast snapped a fire-side Prisoner's
 Chain,
 Exulting Warbler! eased a fretted brain,
 And in a moment charmed my cares to rest.
 Yes, I will forth, bold Bird! and front the blast,
 That we may sing together, if thou wilt,
 So loud, so clear, my Partner through life's day,
 Mute in her nest love-chosen, if not love-built
 Like thine, shall gladden, as in seasons past,
 Thrilled by loose snatches of the social Lay.

RYDAL MOUNT, 1838.

XXXV.

'Tis He whose yester-evening's high disdain
 Beat back the roaring storm—but how subdued
 His day-break note, a sad vicissitude!
 Does the hour's drowsy weight his glee restrain?
 Or, like the nightingale, her joyous vein
 Pleased to renounce, does this dear Thrush attune
 His voice to suit the temper of yon Moon
 Doubly depressed, setting, and in her wane?
 Rise, tardy Sun! and let the Songster prove
 (The balance trembling between night and morn
 No longer) with what ecstasy upborne
 He can pour forth his spirit. In heaven above,
 And earth below, they best can serve true gladness
 Who meet most feelingly the calls of sadness.

XXXVI.

OH what a Wreck! how changed in mien and
 speech!
 Yet—though dread Powers, that work in mystery,
 spin
 Entanglings of the brain; though shadows stretch
 O'er the chilled heart—reflect; far, far within
 Hers is a holy Being, freed from Sin.
 She is not what she seems, a forlorn wretch,
 But delegated Spirits comfort fetch
 To Her from heights that Reason may not win.
 Like Children, She is privileged to hold
 Divine communion; both do live and move,
 Whate'er to shallow Faith their ways unfold,
 Inly illumined by Heaven's pitying love;
 Love pitying innocence not long to last,
 In them—in Her our sins and sorrows past.

XXXVII.

INTENT on gathering wool from hedge and brake
 Yon busy Little-ones rejoice that soon
 A poor old Dame will bless them for the boon :
 Great is their glee while flake they add to flake
 With rival earnestness ; far other strife
 Than will hereafter move them, if they make
 Pastime their idol, give their day of life
 To pleasure snatched for reckless pleasure's sake.
 Can pomp and show allay one heart-born grief ?
 Pains which the World inflicts can she requite ?
 Not for an interval however brief ;
 The silent thoughts that search for stedfast light,
 Love from her depths, and Duty in her might,
 And Faith—these only yield secure relief.

March 8th, 1842.

XXXVIII.

A PLEA FOR AUTHORS, MAY 1838.

FAILING impartial measure to dispense
 To every suitor, Equity is lame ;
 And social Justice, stript of reverence
 For natural rights, a mockery and a shame ;
 Law but a servile dupe of false pretence,
 If, guarding grossest things from common claim
 Now and for ever, She, to works that came
 From mind and spirit, grudge a short-lived fence.
 " What ! lengthened privilege, a lineal tie,
 For *Books !* " Yes, heartless Ones, or be it proved
 That 'tis a fault in Us to have lived and loved
 Like others, with like temporal hopes to die ;
 No public harm that Genius from her course
 Be turned ; and streams of truth dried up, even at
 their source !

XXXIX.

VALEDICTORY SONNET.

Closing the Volume of Sonnets published in 1838.

SERVING no haughty Muse, my hands have here
 Disposed some cultured Flowerets (drawn from spots
 Where they bloomed singly, or in scattered knots),
 Each kind in several beds of one parterre ;
 Both to allure the casual Loiterer,
 And that, so placed, my Nurslings may requite
 Studious regard with opportune delight,
 Nor be unthanked, unless I fondly err.
 But metaphor dismissed, and thanks apart,
 Reader, farewell ! My last words let them be—
 If in this book Fancy and Truth agree ;
 If simple Nature trained by careful Art
 Through It have won a passage to thy heart ;
 Grant me thy love, I crave no other fee !

XL.

TO THE REV. CHRISTOPHER WORDSWORTH, D.D.

MASTER OF HARROW SCHOOL,

After the perusal of his *Theophilus Anglicanus*, recently published.

ENLIGHTENED Teacher, gladly from thy hand
 Have I received this proof of pains bestowed
 By Thee to guide thy Pupils on the road
 That, in our native isle, and every land,
 The Church, when trusting in divine command
 And in her Catholic attributes, hath trod :
 O may these lessons be with profit scanned
 To thy heart's wish, thy labour blest by God !
 So the bright faces of the young and gay
 Shall look more bright—the happy, happier still ;
 Catch, in the pauses of their keenest play,
 Motions of thought which elevate the will
 And, like the Spire that from your classic Hill
 Points heavenward, indicate the end and way.

Rydal Mount, Dec. 11, 1843.

XLI.

TO THE PLANET VENUS.

Upon its approximation (as an Evening Star) to the Earth, Jan. 1838.

WHAT strong allurements draws, what spirit guides,
 Thee, Vesper ! brightening still, as if the nearer
 Thou com'st to man's abode the spot grew dearer
 Night after night ? True is it Nature hides
 Her treasures less and less.—Man now presides
 In power, where once he trembled in his weakness ;
 Science advances with gigantic strides ;
 But are we aught enriched in love and meekness ?
 Aught dost thou see, bright Star ! of pure and wise
 More than in humbler times graced human story ;
 That makes our hearts more apt to sympathise
 With heaven, our souls more fit for future glory,
 When earth shall vanish from our closing eyes,
 Ere we lie down in our last dormitory ?

XLII.

WANSFELL !* this Household has a favoured lot,
 Living with liberty on thee to gaze,
 To watch while Morn first crowns thee with herryays,
 Or when along thy breast serenely float
 Evening's angelic clouds. Yet ne'er a note
 Hath sounded (shame upon the Bard !) thy praise
 For all that thou, as if from heaven, hast brought
 Of glory lavished on our quiet days.
 Bountiful Son of Earth ! when we are gone
 From every object dear to mortal sight,
 As soon we shall be, may these words attest
 How oft, to elevate our spirits, shone
 Thy visionary majesties of light,
 How in thy pensive glooms our hearts found rest.

Dec. 24, 1842.

* The Hill that rises to the south-east, above Ambleside.

XLIII.

WHILE beams of orient light shoot wide and high,
 Deep in the vale a little rural Town *
 Breathes forth a cloud-like creature of its own,
 That mounts not toward the radiant morning sky,
 But, with a less ambitious sympathy,
 Hangs o'er its Parent waking to the cares
 Troubles and toils that every day prepares.
 So Fancy, to the musing Poet's eye,
 Endears that Lingerer. And how blest her sway
 Like influence never may my soul reject)
 Of the calm Heaven, now to its zenith decked
 With glorious forms in numberless array,
 To the lone shepherd on the hills disclose
 Gleams from a world in which the saints repose.

Jan 1, 1843.

XLIV.

IN my mind's eye a Temple, like a cloud
 Slowly surmounting some invidious hill,
 Rose out of darkness: the bright Work stood still;
 And might of its own beauty have been proud,
 But it was fashioned and to God was vowed
 By Virtues that diffused, in every part,
 Spirit divine through forms of human art:
 Faith had her arch—her arch, when winds blow loud,
 Into the consciousness of safety thrilled;
 And Love her towers of dread foundation laid
 Under the grave of things; Hope had her spire
 Star-high, and pointing still to something higher;
 Trembling I gazed, but heard a voice—it said,
 "Hell-gates are powerless Phantoms when *we* build."

XLV.

ON THE PROJECTED KENDAL AND WINDERMERE
RAILWAY.

Is then no nook of English ground secure
 From rash assault?† Schemes of retirement sown
 In youth, and mid the busy world kept pure
 As when their earliest flowers of hope were blown,
 Must perish;—how can they this blight endure?
 And must he too the ruthless change bemoan

* Ambleside.

† The degree and kind of attachment which many of the
 yeomanry feel to their small inheritances can scarcely be
 over-rated. Near the house of one of them stands a mag-
 nificent tree, which a neighbour of the owner advised him
 to fell for profit's sake. "Fell it!" exclaimed the yeoman,
 "I had rather fall on my knees and worship it." It happens,
 believe, that the intended railway would pass through
 his little property, and I hope that an apology for the
 answer will not be thought necessary by one who enters
 into the strength of the feeling.

Who scorns a false utilitarian lure
 Mid his paternal fields at random thrown?
 Baffle the threat, bright Scene, from Orrest-head
 Given to the pausing traveller's rapturous glance:
 Plead for thy peace, thou beautiful romance
 Of nature; and, if human hearts be dead,
 Speak, passing winds; ye torrents, with your strong
 And constant voice, protest against the wrong.

October 12th, 1844.

XLVI.

PROUD were ye, Mountains, when, in times of old,
 Your patriot sons, to stem invasive war,
 Intrenched your brows; ye gloried in each scar:
 Now, for your shame, a Power, the Thirst of Gold,
 That rules o'er Britain like a baneful star,
 Wills that your peace, your beauty, shall be sold,
 And clear way made for her triumphal car
 Through the beloved retreats your arms enfold!
 Heard ye that Whistle? As her long-linked Train
 Swept onwards, did the vision cross your view?
 Yes, ye were startled;—and, in balance true,
 Weighing the mischief with the promised gain,
 Mountains, and Vales, and Floods, I call on you
 To share the passion of a just disdain.

XLVII.

AT FURNESS ABBEY.

HERE, where, of havoc tired and rash undoing,
 Man left this Structure to become Time's prey
 A soothing spirit follows in the way
 That Nature takes, her counter-work pursuing.
 See how her Ivy clasps the sacred Ruin
 Fall to prevent or beautify decay;
 And, on the mouldered walls, how bright, how gay,
 The flowers in pearly dewdrops bloom renewing!
 Thanks to the place, blessings upon the hour;
 Even as I speak the rising Sun's first smile
 Gleams on the grass-crowned top of yon tall Tower
 Whose cawing occupants with joy proclaim
 Prescriptive title to the shattered pile
 Where, Cavendish, *thine* seems nothing but a name!

XLVIII.

AT FURNESS ABBEY.

WELL have yon Railway Labourers to THIS ground
 Withdrawn for noontide rest. They sit, they walk
 Among the Ruins, but no idle talk
 Is heard; to grave demeanour all are bound;
 And from one voice a Hymn with tuneful sound
 Hallows once more the long-deserted Quire

And thrills the old sepulchral earth, around.
 Others look up, and with fixed eyes admire
 That wide-spanned arch, wondering how it was
 raised,
 To keep, so high in air, its strength and grace :

All seem to feel the spirit of the place,
 And by the general reverence God is praised :
 Profane Despoilers, stand ye not reproved,
 While thus these simple-hearted men are moved !

June 21st, 1845.

MEMORIALS OF A TOUR IN SCOTLAND.

1803.

I.

DEPARTURE

FROM THE VALE OF GRASMERE. AUGUST, 1803.

THE gentlest Shade that walked Elysian plains
 Might sometimes covet dissoluble chains ;
 Even for the tenants of the zone that lies
 Beyond the stars, celestial Paradise,
 Methinks 'twould heighten joy, to overleap
 At will the crystal battlements, and peep
 Into some other region, though less fair,
 To see how things are made and managed there.
 Change for the worse might please, incursion bold
 Into the tracts of darkness and of cold ;
 O'er Limbo lake with airy flight to steer,
 And on the verge of Chaos hang in fear.
 Such animation often do I find,
 Power in my breast, wings growing in my mind,
 Then, when some rock or hill is overpast,
 Perchance without one look behind me cast,
 Some barrier with which Nature, from the birth
 Of things, has fenced this fairest spot on earth.
 O pleasant transit, Grasmere ! to resign
 Such happy fields, abodes so calm as thine ;
 Not like an outcast with himself at strife ;
 The slave of business, time, or care for life,
 But moved by choice ; or, if constrained in part,
 Yet still with Nature's freedom at the heart ;—
 To cull contentment upon wildest shores,
 And luxuries extract from bleakest moors ;
 With prompt embrace all beauty to enfold,
 And having rights in all that we behold.
 —Then why these lingering steps ?—A bright
 adieu,
 For a brief absence, proves that love is true ;
 Ne'er can the way be irksome or forlorn
 That winds into itself for sweet return.

II.

AT THE GRAVE OF BURNS.

1803.

SEVEN YEARS AFTER HIS DEATH.

I SHIVER, Spirit fierce and bold,
 At thought of what I now behold :
 As vapours breathed from dungeons cold
 Strike pleasure dead,
 So sadness comes from out the mould
 Where Burns is laid.

And have I then thy bones so near,
 And thou forbidden to appear ?
 As if it were thyself that's here
 I shrink with pain ;
 And both my wishes and my fear
 Alike are vain.

Off weight—nor press on weight !—away
 Dark thoughts !—they came, but not to stay ;
 With chastened feelings would I pay
 The tribute due
 To him, and aught that hides his clay
 From mortal view.

Fresh as the flower, whose modest worth
 He sang, his genius 'glinted' forth,
 Rose like a star that touching earth,
 For so it seems,
 Doth glorify its humble birth
 With matchless beams.

The piercing eye, the thoughtful brow,
 The struggling heart, where be they now ?—
 Full soon the Aspirant of the plough,
 The prompt, the brave,
 Slept, with the obscurest, in the low
 And silent grave.

I mourned with thousands, but as one
 More deeply grieved, for He was gone
 Whose light I hailed when first it shone,
 And showed my youth
 How Verse may build a princely throne
 On humble truth.

Alas! where'er the current tends,
 Regret pursues and with it blends,—
 Huge Criffel's hoary top ascends
 By Skiddaw seen,—
 Neighbours we were, and loving friends
 We might have been ;

True friends though diversely inclined ;
 But heart with heart and mind with mind,
 Where the main fibres are entwined,
 Through Nature's skill,
 May even by contraries be joined
 More closely still.

The tear will start, and let it flow ;
 Thou 'poor Inhabitant below,'
 At this dread moment—even so—
 Might we together
 Have sate and talked where gowans blow,
 Or on wild heather.

What treasures would have then been placed
 Within my reach ; of knowledge graced
 By fancy what a rich repast !
 But why go on !—
 Oh ! spare to sweep, thou mournful blast,
 His grave grass-grown.

There, too, a Son, his joy and pride,
 Not three weeks past the Stripling died,)
 Lies gathered to his Father's side,
 Soul-moving sight !
 Yet one to which is not denied
 Some sad delight.

For *he* is safe, a quiet bed
 Hath early found among the dead,
 Harboured where none can be misled,
 Wronged, or distressed ;
 And surely here it may be said
 That such are blest.

And oh for Thee, by pitying grace
 Checked oft-times in a devious race,
 May He who halloweth the place
 Where Man is laid
 Receive thy Spirit in the embrace
 For which it prayed !

Sighing I turned away ; but ere
 Night fell I heard, or seemed to hear,
 Music that sorrow comes not near,
 A ritual hymn,
 Chaunted in love that casts out fear
 By Seraphim.

III.

THOUGHTS

SUGGESTED THE DAY FOLLOWING, ON THE BANKS OF NITH,
 NEAR THE POET'S RESIDENCE.

Too frail to keep the lofty vow
 That must have followed when his brow
 Was wreathed—"The Vision" tells us how—
 With holly spray,
 He faltered, drifted to and fro,
 And passed away.

Well might such thoughts, dear Sister, throng
 Our minds when, lingering all too long,
 Over the grave of Burns we hung
 In social grief—
 Indulged as if it were a wrong
 To seek relief.

But, leaving each unquiet theme
 Where gentlest judgments may misdeem,
 And prompt to welcome every gleam
 Of good and fair,
 Let us beside this limpid Stream
 Breathe hopeful air.

Enough of sorrow, wreck, and blight ;
 Think rather of those moments bright
 When to the consciousness of right
 His course was true,
 When Wisdom prospered in his sight
 And virtue grew.

Yes, freely let our hearts expand,
 Freely as in youth's season bland,
 When side by side, his Book in hand,
 We went to stray,
 Our pleasure varying at command
 Of each sweet Lay.

How oft inspired must he have trod
 These pathways, yon far-stretching road !
 There lurks his home ; in that Abode,
 With mirth elate,
 Or in his nobly-pensive mood,
 The Rustic sate.

Proud thoughts that Image overawes,
 Before it humbly let us pause,
 And ask of Nature, from what cause
 And by what rules
 She trained her Burns to win applause
 That shames the Schools.

Through busiest street and loneliest glen
 Are felt the flashes of his pen ;
 He rules mid winter snows, and when
 Bees fill their hives ;
 Deep in the general heart of men
 His power survives.

What need of fields in some far clime
 Where Heroes, Sages, Bards sublime,
 And all that fetched the flowing rhyme
 From genuine springs,
 Shall dwell together till old Time
 Folds up his wings ?

Sweet Mercy ! to the gates of Heaven
 This Minstrel lead, his sins forgiven ;
 The rueful conflict, the heart riven
 With vain endeavour,
 And memory of Earth's bitter leaven,
 Effaced for ever.

But why to Him confine the prayer,
 When kindred thoughts and yearnings bear
 On the frail heart the purest share
 With all that live ?—
 The best of what we do and are,
 Just God, forgive !*

IV.

TO THE SONS OF BURNS,

AFTER VISITING THE GRAVE OF THEIR FATHER.

* The Poet's grave is in a corner of the churchyard. We
 'looked at it with melancholy and painful reflections,
 'repeating to each other his own verses—

‘ ‘ Is there a man whose judgment clear,’ &c.’

Extract from the Journal of my Fellow-traveller.

'MID crowded obelisks and urns
 I sought the untimely grave of Burns ;
 Sons of the Bard, my heart still mourns
 With sorrow true ;
 And more would grieve, but that it turns
 Trembling to you !

Through twilight shades of good and ill
 Ye now are panting up life's hill,
 And more than common strength and skill
 Must ye display ;
 If ye would give the better will
 Its lawful sway.

Hath Nature strung your nerves to bear
 Intemperance with less harm, beware !
 But if the Poet's wit ye share,
 Like him can speed
 The social hour—of tenfold care
 There will be need ;

For honest men delight will take
 To spare your failings for his sake,
 Will flatter you,—and fool and rake
 Your steps pursue ;
 And of your Father's name will make
 A snare for you.

Far from their noisy haunts retire,
 And add your voices to the quire
 That sanctify the cottage fire
 With service meet ;
 There seek the genius of your Sire,
 His spirit greet ;

Or where, 'mid 'lonely heights and hows,'
 He paid to Nature tuneful vows ;
 Or wiped his honourable brows
 Bedewed with toil,
 While reapers strove, or busy ploughs
 Upturned the soil ;

His judgment with benignant ray
 Shall guide, his fancy cheer, your way ;
 But ne'er to a seductive lay
 Let faith be given ;
 Nor deem that 'light which leads astray,
 Is light from Heaven.'

Let no mean hope your souls enslave ;
 Be independent, generous, brave ;
 Your Father such example gave,
 And such revere ;
 But be admonished by his grave,
 And think, and fear !

v.

ELLEN IRWIN :

OR,

THE BRAES OF KIRTLE*.

FAIR Ellen Irwin, when she sate
Upon the braes of Kirtle,
Was lovely as a Grecian maid
Adorned with wreaths of myrtle ;
Young Adam Bruce beside her lay,
And there did they beguile the day
With love and gentle speeches,
Beneath the budding beeches.

From many knights and many squires
The Bruce had been selected ;
And Gordon, fairest of them all,
By Ellen was rejected.
Sad tidings to that noble Youth !
For it may be proclaimed with truth,
If Bruce hath loved sincerely,
That Gordon loves as dearly.

But what are Gordon's form and face,
His shattered hopes and crosses,
To them, 'mid Kirtle's pleasant braes,
Reclined on flowers and mosses ?
Alas that ever he was born !
The Gordon, couched behind a thorn,
Sees them and their caressing ;
Beholds them blest and blessing.

Proud Gordon, maddened by the thoughts
That through his brain are travelling,
Rushed forth, and at the heart of Bruce
He launched a deadly javelin !
Fair Ellen saw it as it came,
And, starting up to meet the same,
Did with her body cover
The Youth, her chosen lover.

And, falling into Bruce's arms, .
Thus died the beauteous Ellen,
Thus, from the heart of her True-love,
The mortal spear repelling.
And Bruce, as soon as he had slain
The Gordon, sailed away to Spain ;
And fought with rage incessant
Against the Moorish crescent.

* The Kirtle is a river in the southern part of Scotland, the banks of which the events here related took place.

But many days, and many months,
And many years ensuing,
This wretched Knight did vainly seek
The death that he was wooing.
So, coming his last help to crave,
Heart-broken, upon Ellen's grave
His body he extended,
And there his sorrow ended.

Now ye, who willingly have heard
The tale I have been telling,
May in Kirkconnel churchyard view
The grave of lovely Ellen :
By Ellen's side the Bruce is laid ;
And, for the stone upon his head,
May no rude hand deface it,
And its forlorn *hic jacet* !

VI.

TO A HIGHLAND GIRL.

(AT INVERSENAIDE, UPON LOCH LOMOND.)

SWEET Highland Girl, a very shower
Of beauty is thy earthly dower !
Twice seven consenting years have shed
Their utmost bounty on thy head :
And these grey rocks ; that household lawn ;
Those trees, a veil just half withdrawn ;
This fall of water that doth make
A murmur near the silent lake ;
This little bay ; a quiet road
That holds in shelter thy Abode—
In truth together do ye seem
Like something fashioned in a dream ;
Such Forms as from their covert peep
When earthly cares are laid asleep !
But, O fair Creature ! in the light
Of common day, so heavenly bright,
I bless Thee, Vision as thou art,
I bless thee with a human heart ;
God shield thee to thy latest years !
Thee, neither know I, nor thy peers ;
And yet my eyes are filled with tears.

With earnest feeling I shall pray
For thee when I am far away :
For never saw I mien, or face,
In which more plainly I could trace
Benignity and home-bred sense
Ripening in perfect innocence.
Here scattered, like a random seed,
Remote from men, Thou dost not need

The embarrassed look of shy distress,
 And maidenly shamefacedness :
 Thou wear'st upon thy forehead clear
 The freedom of a Mountaineer :
 A face with gladness overspread !
 Soft smiles, by human kindness bred !
 And seemliness complete, that sways
 Thy courtesies, about thee plays ;
 With no restraint, but such as springs
 From quick and eager visitings
 Of thoughts that lie beyond the reach
 Of thy few words of English speech :
 A bondage sweetly brooked, a strife
 That gives thy gestures grace and life !
 So have I, not unmoved in mind,
 Seen birds of tempest-loving kind—
 Thus beating up against the wind.

What hand but would a garland cull
 For thee who art so beautiful ?
 O happy pleasure ! here to dwell
 Beside thee in some heathy dell ;
 Adopt your homely ways, and dress,
 A Shepherd, thou a Shepherdess !
 But I could frame a wish for thee
 More like a grave reality :
 Thou art to me but as a wave
 Of the wild sea ; and I would have
 Some claim upon thee, if I could,
 Though but of common neighbourhood.
 What joy to hear thee, and to see !
 Thy elder Brother I would be,
 Thy Father—anything to thee !

Now thanks to Heaven ! that of its grace
 Hath led me to this lonely place.
 Joy have I had ; and going hence
 I bear away my recompence.
 In spots like these it is we prize
 Our Memory, feel that she hath eyes :
 Then, why should I be loth to stir ?
 I feel this place was made for her ;
 To give new pleasure like the past,
 Continued long as life shall last.
 Nor am I loth, though pleased at heart,
 Sweet Highland Girl ! from thee to part :
 For I, methinks, till I grow old,
 As fair before me shall behold,
 As I do now, the cabin small,
 The lake, the bay, the waterfall ;
 And Thee, the Spirit of them all !

VII.

GLEN-ALMAIN ;

OR,

THE NARROW GLEN.

In this still place, remote from men,
 Sleeps Ossian, in the NARROW GLEN ;
 In this still place, where murmurs on
 But one meek streamlet, only one :
 He sang of battles, and the breath
 Of stormy war, and violent death ;
 And should, methinks, when all was past,
 Have rightfully been laid at last
 Where rocks were rudely heaped, and rent
 As by a spirit turbulent ;
 Where sights were rough, and sounds were wild,
 And everything unreconciled ;
 In some complaining, dim retreat,
 For fear and melancholy meet ;
 But this is calm ; there cannot be
 A more entire tranquillity.

Does then the Bard sleep here indeed !
 Or is it but a groundless creed ?
 What matters it ?—I blame them not
 Whose Fancy in this lonely Spot
 Was moved ; and in such way expressed
 Their notion of its perfect rest.
 A convent, even a hermit's cell,
 Would break the silence of this Dell :
 It is not quiet, is not ease ;
 But something deeper far than these :
 The separation that is here
 Is of the grave ; and of austere
 Yet happy feelings of the dead :
 And, therefore, was it rightly said
 That Ossian, last of all his race !
 Lies buried in this lonely place.

VIII.

STEPPING WESTWARD.

While my Fellow-traveller and I were walking by the side
 of Loch Ketterine, one fine evening after sunset, in our
 road to a Hut where, in the course of our Tour, we had
 been hospitably entertained some weeks before, we met
 in one of the loneliest parts of that solitary region, two
 well-dressed Women, one of whom said to us, by way
 of greeting, "What, you are stepping westward?"

"*What, you are stepping westward?*"—"Yea."
 —"Twould be a *wildish* destiny,
 If we, who thus together roam
 In a strange Land, and far from home,

Were in this place the guests of Chance :
Yet who would stop, or fear to advance,
Though home or shelter he had none,
With such a sky to lead him on ?

The dewy ground was dark and cold ;
Behind, all gloomy to behold ;
And stepping westward seemed to be
A kind of heavenly destiny :
I liked the greeting ; 'twas a sound
Of something without place or bound ;
And seemed to give me spiritual right
To travel through that region bright.

The voice was soft, and she who spake
Was walking by her native lake :
The salutation had to me
The very sound of courtesy :
Its power was felt ; and while my eye
Was fixed upon the glowing Sky,
The echo of the voice enwrought
A human sweetness with the thought
Of travelling through the world that lay
Before me in my endless way.

IX.

THE SOLITARY REAPER.

BHOLD her, single in the field,
Yon solitary Highland Lass !
Reaping and singing by herself ;
Stop here, or gently pass !
Alone she cuts and binds the grain,
And sings a melancholy strain ;
O listen ! for the Vale profound
Is overflowing with the sound.

No Nightingale did ever chaunt
More welcome notes to weary bands
Of travellers in some shady haunt,
Among Arabian sands :
A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard
In spring-time from the Cuckoo-bird,
Breaking the silence of the seas
Among the farthest Hebrides.

Will no one tell me what she sings?—
Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow
For old, unhappy, far-off things,
And battles long ago :
Or is it some more humble lay,
Familiar matter of to-day ?
Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,
That has been, and may be again ?

Whate'er the theme, the Maiden sang
As if her song could have no ending ;
I saw her singing at her work,
And o'er the sickle bending ;—
I listened, motionless and still ;
And, as I mounted up the hill,
The music in my heart I bore,
Long after it was heard no more.

X.

ADDRESS

TO

KILCHURN CASTLE, UPON LOCH AWE.

'From the top of the hill a most impressive scene opened
'upon our view,—a ruined Castle on an Island (for an
'Island the flood had made it) at some distance from the
'shore, backed by a Cove of the Mountain Cruachan,
'down which came a foaming stream. The Castle
'occupied every foot of the Island that was visible to us,
'appearing to rise out of the water,—mists rested upon
'the mountain side, with spots of sunshine ; there was a
'mild desolation in the low grounds, a solemn grandeur
'in the mountains, and the Castle was wild, yet stately—
'not dismantled of turrets—nor the walls broken down,
'though obviously a ruin.'—*Extract from the Journal of
my Companion.*

CHILD of loud-throated War ! the mountain Stream
Roars in thy hearing ; but thy hour of rest
Is come, and thou art silent in thy age ;
Save when the wind sweeps by and sounds are caught
Ambiguous, neither wholly thine nor theirs.
Oh ! there is life that breathes not ; Powers there are
That touch each other to the quick in modes
Which the gross world no sense hath to perceive,
No soul to dream of. What art Thou, from care
Cast off—abandoned by thy rugged Sire,
Nor by soft Peace adopted ; though, in place
And in dimension, such that thou might'st seem
But a mere footstool to yon sovereign Lord,
Huge Cruachan, (a thing that meaner hills
Might crush, nor know that it had suffered harm ;)
Yet he, not loth, in favour of thy claims
To reverence, suspends his own ; submitting
All that the God of Nature hath conferred,
All that he holds in common with the stars,
To the memorial majesty of Time
Impersonated in thy calm decay !

Take, then, thy seat, Vicegerent unreprieved !
Now, while a farewell gleam of evening light
Is fondly lingering on thy shattered front,
Do thou, in turn, be paramount ; and rule

Over the pomp and beauty of a scene
 Whose mountains, torrents, lake, and woods, unite
 To pay thee homage ; and with these are joined,
 In willing admiration and respect,
 Two Hearts, which in thy presence might be called
 Youthful as Spring.—Shade of departed Power,
 Skeleton of unfleshed humanity,
 The chronicle were welcome that should call
 Into the compass of distinct regard
 The toils and struggles of thy infant years !
 Yon foaming flood seems motionless as ice ;
 Its dizzy turbulence eludes the eye,
 Frozen by distance ; so, majestic Pile,
 To the perception of this Age, appear
 Thy fierce beginnings, softened and subdued
 And quieted in character—the strife,
 The pride, the fury uncontrollable,
 Lost on the ærial heights of the Crusades* !

XI.

ROB ROY'S GRAVE.

The history of Rob Roy is sufficiently known ; his grave
 is near the head of Loch Ketterine, in one of those small
 pinfold-like Burial-grounds, of neglected and desolate
 appearance, which the traveller meets with in the High-
 lands of Scotland.

A FAMOUS man is Robin Hood,
 The English ballad-singer's joy !
 And Scotland has a thief as good,
 An outlaw of as daring mood ;
 She has her brave Rob Roy !
 Then clear the weeds from off his Grave,
 And let us chant a passing stave,
 In honour of that Hero brave !

Heaven gave Rob Roy a dauntless heart
 And wondrous length and strength of arm :
 Nor craved he more to quell his foes,
 Or keep his friends from harm.

Yet was Rob Roy as *wise* as brave ;
 Forgive me if the phrase be strong ;—
 A Poet worthy of Rob Roy
 Must scorn a timid song.

Say, then, that he was wise as brave ;
 As wise in thought as bold in deed :
 For in the principles of things
He sought his moral creed.

* The tradition is, that the Castle was built by a Lady
 during the absence of her Lord in Palestine.

Said generous Rob, " What need of books !
 Burn all the statutes and their shelves :
 They stir us up against our kind ;
 And worse, against ourselves.

We have a passion—make a law,
 Too false to guide us or control !
 And for the law itself we fight
 In bitterness of soul.

And, puzzled, blinded thus, we lose
 Distinctions that are plain and few :
 These find I graven on my heart:
That tells me what to do.

The creatures see of flood and field,
 And those that travel on the wind !
 With them no strife can last ; they live
 In peace, and peace of mind.

For why ?—because the good old rule
 Sufficeth them, the simple plan,
 That they should take, who have the power,
 And they should keep who can.

A lesson that is quickly learned,
 A signal this which all can see !
 Thus nothing here provokes the strong
 To wanton cruelty.

All freakishness of mind is checked ;
 He tamed, who foolishly aspires ;
 While to the measure of his might
 Each fashions his desires.

All kinds, and creatures, stand and fall
 By strength of prowess or of wit :
 'Tis God's appointment who must sway,
 And who is to submit.

Since, then, the rule of right is plain,
 And longest life is but a day ;
 To have my ends, maintain my rights,
 I'll take the shortest way."

And thus among these rocks he lived,
 Through summer heat and winter snow ;
 The Eagle, he was lord above,
 And Rob was lord below.

So was it—*would*, at least, have been
 But through untowardness of fate ;
 For Polity was then too strong—
 He came an age too late ;

Or shall we say an age too soon!
 For, were the bold Man living *now*,
 How might he flourish in his pride,
 With buds on every bough!

Then rents and factors, rights of chase,
 Sheriffs, and lairds and their domains,
 Would all have seemed but paltry things,
 Not worth a moment's pains.

Rob Roy had never lingered here,
 To these few meagre Vales confined;
 But thought how wide the world, the times
 How fairly to his mind!

And to his Sword he would have said,
 "Do Thou my sovereign will enact
 From land to land through half the earth!
 Judge thou of law and fact!

'Tis fit that we should do our part,
 Becoming, that mankind should learn
 That we are not to be surpassed
 In fatherly concern.

Of old things all are over old,
 Of good things none are good enough:—
 We'll shew that we can help to frame
 A world of other stuff.

I, too, will have my kings that take
 From me the sign of life and death:
 Kingdoms shall shift about, like clouds,
 Obedient to my breath."

And, if the word had been fulfilled,
 As *might* have been, then, thought of joy!
 France would have had her present Boast,
 And we our own Rob Roy!

Oh! say not so; compare them not;
 I would not wrong thee, Champion brave!
 Would wrong thee nowhere; least of all
 Here standing by thy grave.

For Thou, although with some wild thoughts,
 Wild Chieftain of a savage Clan!
 Hadst this to boast of; thou didst love
 The *liberty* of man.

And, had it been thy lot to live
 With us who now behold the light,
 Thou would'st have nobly stirred thyself,
 And battled for the Right.

For thou wert still the poor man's stay,
 The poor man's heart, the poor man's hand;
 And all the oppressed, who wanted strength,
 Had thine at their command.

Bear witness many a pensive sigh
 Of thoughtful Herdsman when he strays
 Alone upon Loch Vool's heights,
 And by Loch Lomond's braes!

And, far and near, through vale and hill,
 Are faces that attest the same;
 The proud heart flashing through the eyes,
 At sound of Rob Roy's name.

XII.

SONNET.

COMPOSED AT ——— CASTLE.

DEGENERATE Douglas! oh, the unworthy Lord!
 Whom mere despite of heart could so far please,
 And love of havoc, (for with such disease
 Fame taxes him,) that he could send forth word
 To level with the dust a noble horde,
 A brotherhood of venerable Trees,
 Leaving an ancient dome, and towers like these,
 Beggared and outraged!—Many hearts deplored
 The fate of those old Trees; and oft with pain
 The traveller, at this day, will stop and gaze
 On wrongs, which Nature scarcely seems to heed:
 For sheltered places, bosoms, nooks, and bays,
 And the pure mountains, and the gentle Tweed,
 And the green silent pastures, yet remain.

XIII.

YARROW UNVISITED.

(See the various Poems the scene of which is laid upon the banks of the Yarrow; in particular, the exquisite Ballad of Hamilton beginning

'Busk ye, busk ye, my bonny, bonny Bride,
 Busk ye, busk ye, my winsome Marrow!')

FROM Stirling castle we had seen
 The mazy Forth unravelled;
 Had trod the banks of Clyde, and Tay,
 And with the Tweed had travelled;
 And when we came to Clovenford,
 Then said my '*winsome Marrow*,'
 "Whate'er betide, we'll turn aside,
 And see the Braes of Yarrow."

"Let Yarrow folk, *frae* Sellkirk town,
 Who have been buying, selling,
 Go back to Yarrow, 'tis their own ;
 Each maiden to her dwelling !
 On Yarrow's banks let herons feed,
 Hares couch, and rabbits burrow !
 But we will downward with the Tweed,
 Nor turn aside to Yarrow.

There's Galla Water, Leader Haughs,
 Both lying right before us ;
 And Dryborough, where with chiming Tweed
 The lintwhites sing in chorus ;
 There's pleasant Tiviot-dale, a land
 Made blithe with plough and harrow :
 Why throw away a needful day
 To go in search of Yarrow ?

What's Yarrow but a river bare,
 That glides the dark hills under ?
 There are a thousand such elsewhere
 As worthy of your wonder."
 —Strange words they seemed of slight and scorn ;
 My True-love sighed for sorrow ;
 And looked me in the face, to think
 I thus could speak of Yarrow !

"Oh ! green," said I, "are Yarrow's holms,
 And sweet is Yarrow flowing !
 Fair hangs the apple *frae* the rock *,
 But we will leave it growing.
 O'er hilly path, and open Strath,
 We'll wander Scotland thorough ;
 But, though so near, we will not turn
 Into the dale of Yarrow.

Let beeves and home-bred kine partake
 The sweets of Burn-mill meadow ;
 The swan on still St. Mary's Lake
 Float double, swan and shadow !
 We will not see them ; will not go,
 To-day, nor yet to-morrow ;
 Enough if in our hearts we know
 There's such a place as Yarrow.

Be Yarrow stream unseen, unknown !
 It must, or we shall rue it :
 We have a vision of our own ;
 Ah ! why should we undo it ?
 The treasured dreams of times long past,
 We'll keep them, winsome Marrow !
 For when we're there, although 'tis fair,
 'Twill be another Yarrow !

* See Hamilton's Ballad as above.

If Care with freezing years should come,
 And wandering seem but folly,—
 Should we be loth to stir from home,
 And yet be melancholy ;
 Should life be dull, and spirits low,
 'Twill soothe us in our sorrow,
 That earth has something yet to show,
 The bonny holms of Yarrow !"

XIV.

SONNET

IN THE PASS OF KILLICRANKY,
 An invasion being expected, October 1803.

Six thousand veterans practised in war's game,
 Tried men, at Killicranky were arrayed
 Against an equal host that wore the plaid,
 Shepherds and herdsmen.—Like a whirlwind came
 The Highlanders, the slaughter spread like flame ;
 And Garry, thundering down his mountain-road,
 Was stopped, and could not breathe beneath the load
 Of the dead bodies.—'Twas a day of shame
 For them whom precept and the pedantry
 Of cold mechanic battle do enslave.
 O for a single hour of that Dundee,
 Who on that day the word of onset gave !
 Like conquest would the Men of England see ;
 And her Foes find a like inglorious grave.

XV.

THE MATRON OF JEDBOROUGH AND HER
 HUSBAND.

At Jedborough, my companion and I went into private lodgings for a few days ; and the following Verses were called forth by the character and domestic situation of our Hostess.

AGE ! twine thy brows with fresh spring flowers
 And call a train of laughing Hours ;
 And bid them dance, and bid them sing ;
 And thou, too, mingle in the ring !
 Take to thy heart a new delight ;
 If not, make merry in despite
 That there is One who scorns thy power :—
 But dance ! for under Jedborough Tower,
 A Matron dwells who, though she bears
 The weight of more than seventy years,
 Lives in the light of youthful glee,
 And she will dance and sing with thee.

Nay! start not at that Figure—there!
 Him who is rooted to his chair!
 Look at him—look again! for he
 Hath long been of thy family.
 With legs that move not, if they can,
 And useless arms, a trunk of man,
 He sits, and with a vacant eye;
 A sight to make a stranger sigh!
 Deaf, drooping, that is now his doom:
 His world is in this single room:
 Is this a place for mirthful cheer?
 Can merry-making enter here?

The joyous Woman is the Mate
 Of him in that forlorn estate!
 He breathes a subterraneous damp;
 But bright as Vesper shines her lamp:
 He is as mute as Jedborough Tower:
 She jocund as it was of yore,
 With all its bravery on; in times
 When all alive with merry chimes,
 Upon a sun-bright morn of May,
 It roused the Vale to holiday.

I praise thee, Matron! and thy due
 Is praise, heroic praise; and true!
 With admiration I behold
 Thy gladness unsubdued and bold:
 Thy looks, thy gestures, all present
 The picture of a life well spent:
 This do I see; and something more;
 A strength unthought of heretofore!
 Delighted am I for thy sake;
 And yet a higher joy partake:
 Our Human-nature throws away
 Its second twilight, and looks gay;
 A land of promise and of pride
 Unfolding, wide as life is wide.

Ah! see her helpless Charge! enclosed
 Within himself as seems, composed;
 To fear of loss, and hope of gain,
 The strife of happiness and pain,
 Utterly dead! yet in the guise
 Of little infants, when their eyes
 Begin to follow to and fro
 The persons that before them go,
 He tracks her motions, quick or slow.
 Her buoyant spirit can prevail
 Where common cheerfulness would fail;
 She strikes upon him with the heat
 Of July suns; he feels it sweet;
 An animal delight though dim!
 'Tis all that now remains for him!

The more I looked, I wondered more—
 And, while I scanned them o'er and o'er,
 Some inward trouble suddenly
 Broke from the Matron's strong black eye—
 A remnant of uneasy light,
 A flash of something over-bright!
 Nor long this mystery did detain
 My thoughts;—she told in pensive strain
 That she had borne a heavy yoke,
 Been stricken by a twofold stroke;
 Ill health of body; and had pined
 Beneath worse ailments of the mind.

So be it!—but let praise ascend
 To Him who is our lord and friend!
 Who from disease and suffering
 Hath called for thee a second spring;
 Repaid thee for that sore distress
 By no untimely joyousness;
 Which makes of thine a blissful state;
 And cheers thy melancholy Mate!

XVI.

FLY, some kind Harbinger, to Grasmere-dale!
 Say that we come, and come by this day's light;
 Fly upon swiftest wing round field and height,
 But chiefly let one Cottage hear the tale;
 There let a mystery of joy prevail,
 The kitten frolic, like a gamesome sprite,
 And Rover whine, as at a second sight
 Of near-approaching good that shall not fail:
 And from that Infant's face let joy appear;
 Yea, let our Mary's one companion child—
 That hath her six weeks' solitude beguiled
 With intimations manifold and dear,
 While we have wandered over wood and wild—
 Smile on his Mother now with bolder cheer.

XVII.

THE BLIND HIGHLAND BOY.

A TALE TOLD BY THE FIRE-SIDE, AFTER RETURNING TO
 THE VALE OF GRASMERE.

Now we are tired of boisterous joy,
 Have romped enough, my little Boy!
 Jane hangs her head upon my breast,
 And you shall bring your stool and rest;
 This corner is your own.

There ! take your seat, and let me see
That you can listen quietly :
And, as I promised, I will tell
That strange adventure which befel
A poor blind Highland Boy.

A *Highland Boy* !—why call him so ?
Because, my Darlings, ye must know
That, under hills which rise like towers,
Far higher hills than these of ours !
He from his birth had lived.

He ne'er had seen one earthly sight
The sun, the day ; the stars, the night ;
Or tree, or butterfly, or flower,
Or fish in stream, or bird in bower,
Or woman, man, or child.

And yet he neither drooped nor pined,
Nor had a melancholy mind ;
For God took pity on the Boy,
And was his friend ; and gave him joy
Of which we nothing know.

His Mother, too, no doubt, above
Her other children him did love :
For, was she here, or was she there,
She thought of him with constant care,
And more than mother's love.

And proud she was of heart, when clad
In crimson stockings, tartan plaid,
And bonnet with a feather gay,
To Kirk he on the sabbath day
Went hand in hand with her.

A dog too, had he ; not for need,
But one to play with and to feed ;
Which would have led him, if bereft
Of company or friends, and left
Without a better guide.

And then the bagpipes he could blow—
And thus from house to house would go ;
And all were pleased to hear and see,
For none heard sweeter melody
Than did the poor blind Boy.

Yet he had many a restless dream ;
Both when he heard the eagles scream,
And when he heard the torrents roar,
And heard the water beat the shore
Near which their cottage stood.

Beside a lake their cottage stood,
Not small like ours, a peaceful flood ;
But one of mighty size, and strange ;
That, rough or smooth, is full of change,
And stirring in its bed.

For to this lake, by night and day,
The great Sea-water finds its way
Through long, long windings of the hills
And drinks up all the pretty rills
And rivers large and strong :

Then hurries back the road it came—
Returns, on errand still the same ;
This did it when the earth was new ;
And this for evermore will do,
As long as earth shall last.

And, with the coming of the tide,
Come boats and ships that safely ride
Between the woods and lofty rocks ;
And to the shepherds with their flocks
Bring tales of distant lands.

And of those tales, whate'er they were,
The blind Boy always had his share ;
Whether of mighty towns, or vales
With warmer suns and softer gales,
Or wonders of the Deep.

Yet more it pleased him, more it stirred,
When from the water-side he heard
The shouting, and the jolly cheers ;
The bustle of the mariners
In stillness or in storm.

But what do his desires avail ?
For He must never handle sail ;
Nor mount the mast, nor row, nor float
In sailor's ship, or fisher's boat,
Upon the rocking waves.

His Mother often thought, and said,
What sin would be upon her head
If she should suffer this : " My Son,
Whate'er you do, leave this undone ;
The danger is so great."

Thus lived he by Loch-Leven's side
Still sounding with the sounding tide,
And heard the billows leap and dance,
Without a shadow of mischance,
Till he was ten years old.

When one day (and now mark me well,
Ye soon shall know how this befel)
He in a vessel of his own,
On the swift flood is hurrying down,
Down to the mighty Sea.

In such a vessel never more
May human creature leave the shore !
If this or that way he should stir,
Woe to the poor blind Mariner !
For death will be his doom.

But say what bears him ?—Ye have seen
The Indian's bow, his arrows keen,
Rare beasts, and birds with plumage bright ;
Gifts which, for wonder or delight,
Are brought in ships from far.

Such gifts had those seafaring men
Spread round that haven in the glen ;
Each hut, perchance, might have its own ;
And to the Boy they all were known—
He knew and prized them all.

The rarest was a Turtle-shell
Which he, poor Child, had studied well ;
A shell of ample size, and light
As the pearly car of Amphitrite,
That sportive dolphins drew.

And, as a Coracle that braves
On Vaga's breast the fretful waves,
This shell upon the deep would swim,
And gaily lift its fearless brim
Above the tossing surge.

And this the little blind Boy knew :
And he a story strange yet true
Had heard, how in a shell like this
An English Boy, O thought of bliss !
Had stoutly launched from shore ;

Launched from the margin of a bay
Among the Indian isles, where lay
His father's ship, and had sailed far—
To join that gallant ship of war,
In his delightful shell.

Our Highland Boy oft visited
The house that held this prize ; and, led
By choice or chance, did thither come
One day when no one was at home,
And found the door unbarred.

While there he sate, alone and blind,
That story flashed upon his mind ;—
A bold thought roused him, and he took
The shell from out its secret nook,
And bore it on his head.

He launched his vessel,—and in pride
Of spirit, from Loch Leven's side,
Stepped into it—his thoughts all free
As the light breezes that with glee
Sang through the adventurer's hair.

A while he stood upon his feet ;
He felt the motion—took his seat ;
Still better pleased as more and more
The tide retreated from the shore,
And sucked, and sucked him in.

And there he is in face of Heaven.
How rapidly the Child is driven !
The fourth part of a mile, I ween,
He thus had gone, ere he was seen
By any human eye.

But when he was first seen, oh me
What shrieking and what misery !
For many saw ; among the rest
His Mother, she who loved him best,
She saw her poor blind Boy.

But for the child, the sightless Boy,
It is the triumph of his joy !
The bravest traveller in balloon,
Mounting as if to reach the moon,
Was never half so blessed.

And let him, let him go his way,
Alone, and innocent, and gay !
For, if good Angels love to wait
On the forlorn unfortunate,
This Child will take no harm.

But now the passionate lament,
Which from the crowd on shore was sent,
The cries which broke from old and young
In Gaelic, or the English tongue,
Are stifled—all is still.

And quickly with a silent crew
A boat is ready to pursue ;
And from the shore their course they take,
And swiftly down the running lake
They follow the blind Boy.

But soon they move with softer pace ;
 So have ye seen the fowler chase
 On Grasmere's clear unruffled breast
 A youngling of the wild-duck's nest
 With deftly-lifted oar ;

Or as the wily sailors crept
 To seize (while on the Deep it slept)
 The hapless creature which did dwell
 Erewhile within the dancing shell,
 They steal upon their prey.

With sound the least that can be made,
 They follow, more and more afraid,
 More cautious as they draw more near ;
 But in his darkness he can hear,
 And guesses their intent.

"*Lei-gha—Lei-gha*"—he then cried out,
 "*Lei-gha—Lei-gha*"—with eager shout ;
 Thus did he cry, and thus did pray,
 And what he meant was, "Keep away,
 And leave me to myself !"

Alas ! and when he felt their hands——
 You've often heard of magic wands,
 That with a motion overthrow
 A palace of the proudest show,
 Or melt it into air :

So all his dreams—that inward light
 With which his soul had shone so bright——
 All vanished ;—'twas a heartfelt cross
 To him, a heavy, bitter loss,
 As he had ever known.

But hark ! a gratulating voice,
 With which the very hills rejoice :
 'Tis from the crowd, who tremblingly
 Have watched the event, and now can see
 That he is safe at last.

And then, when he was brought to land,
 Full sure they were a happy band,
 Which, gathering round, did on the banks
 Of that great Water give God thanks,
 And welcomed the poor Child.

And in the general joy of heart
 The blind Boy's little dog took part ;
 He leapt about, and oft did kiss
 His master's hands in sign of bliss,
 With sound like lamentation.

But most of all, his Mother dear,
 She who had fainted with her fear,
 Rejoiced when waking she espies
 The Child ; when she can trust her eyes,
 And touches the blind Boy.

She led him home, and wept amain,
 When he was in the house again :
 Tears flowed in torrents from her eyes ;
 She kissed him—how could she chastise !
 She was too happy far.

Thus, after he had fondly braved
 The perilous Deep, the Boy was saved ;
 And, though his fancies had been wild,
 Yet he was pleased and reconciled
 To live in peace on shore.

And in the lonely Highland dell
 Still do they keep the Turtle-shell ;
 And long the story will repeat
 Of the blind Boy's adventurous feat,
 And how he was preserved.

Note.—It is recorded in Dampier's *Voyages*, that a boy, son of the captain of a *Man-of-War*, seated himself in a Turtle-shell, and floated in it from the shore to his father's ship, which lay at anchor at the distance of half a mile. In deference to the opinion of a Friend, I have substituted such a shell for the less elegant vessel in which my blind Voyager did actually entrust himself to the dangerous current of Loch Leven, as was related to me by an eye-witness.

MEMORIALS OF A TOUR IN SCOTLAND.

1814.

I.

SUGGESTED BY A BEAUTIFUL RUIN UPON ONE OF THE ISLANDS OF LOCH LOMOND, A PLACE CHOSEN FOR THE RETREAT OF A SOLITARY INDIVIDUAL, FROM WHOM THIS HABITATION ACQUIRED THE NAME OF

THE BROWNIE'S CELL.

I.

o barren heath, bleak moor, and quaking fen,
r depth of labyrinthine glen ;
r into trackless forest set
With trees, whose lofty umbrage met ;
World-wearied Men withdrew of yore ;
Penance their trust, and prayer their store ;
nd in the wilderness were bound
o such apartments as they found ;
r with a new ambition raised ;
hat God might suitably be praised.

II.

igh lodged the *Warrior*, like a bird of prey ;
r where broad waters round him lay :
ut this wild Ruin is no ghost
f his devices—buried, lost !
Within this little lonely isle
here stood a consecrated Pile ;
Where tapers burned, and mass was sung,
or them whose timid Spirits clung
o mortal succour, though the tomb
ad fixed, for ever fixed, their doom !

III.

pon those servants of another world
hen madding Power her bolts had hurled,
heir habitation shook ;—it fell,
nd perished, save one narrow cell ;
hither, at length, a Wretch retired
Who neither grovelled nor aspired :
e, struggling in the net of pride,
he future scorned, the past defied ;
till tempering, from the unguilty forge
f vain conceit, an iron scourge !

IV.

roud Remnant was he of a fearless Race,
Who stood and flourished face to face

With their perennial hills ;—but Crime,
Hastening the stern decrees of Time,
Brought low a Power, which from its home
Burst, when repose grew wearisome ;
And, taking impulse from the sword,
And, mocking its own plighted word,
Had found, in ravage widely dealt,
Its warfare's bourn, its travel's belt !

V.

All, all were dispossessed, save him whose smile
Shot lightning through this lonely Isle !
No right had he but what he made
To this small spot, his leafy shade ;
But the ground lay within that ring
To which he only dared to cling ;
Renouncing here, as worse than dead,
The craven few who bowed the head
Beneath the change ; who heard a claim
How loud ! yet lived in peace with shame.

VI.

From year to year this shaggy Mortal went
(So seemed it) down a strange descent :
Till they, who saw his outward frame,
Fixed on him an unhallowed name ;
Him, free from all malicious taint,
And guiding, like the *Patmos* Saint,
A pen unwearied—to indite,
In his lone Isle, the dreams of night ;
Impassioned dreams, that strove to span
The faded glories of his Clan !

VII.

Suns that through blood their western harbour
sought,
And stars that in their courses fought ;
Towers rent, winds combating with woods,
Lands deluged by unbridled floods ;
And beast and bird that from the spell
Of sleep took import terrible ;—
These types mysterious (if the show
Of battle and the routed foe
Had failed) would furnish an array
Of matter for the dawning day !

VIII.

How disappeared He?—ask the newt and toad,
 Inheritors of his abode;
 The otter crouching undisturbed,
 In her dank cleft;—but be thou curbed,
 O froward Fancy! 'mid a scene
 Of aspect winning and serene;
 For those offensive creatures shun
 The inquisition of the sun!
 And in this region flowers delight,
 And all is lovely to the sight.

IX.

Spring finds not here a melancholy breast,
 When she applies her annual test
 To dead and living; when her breath
 Quickens, as now, the withered heath;—
 Nor flaunting Summer—when he throws
 His soul into the briar-rose;
 Or calls the lily from her sleep
 Prolonged beneath the bordering deep;
 Nor Autumn, when the viewless wren
 Is warbling near the BROWNIE's Den.

X.

Wild Relique! beauteous as the chosen spot
 In Nysa's isle, the embellished grot;
 Whither, by care of Libyan Jove,
 (High Servant of paternal Love)
 Young Bacchus was conveyed—to lie
 Safe from his step-dame Rhea's eye;
 Where bud, and bloom, and fruitage, glowed,
 Close-crowding round the infant-god;
 All colours,—and the liveliest streak
 A foil to his celestial cheek!

II.

COMPOSED AT CORA LINN,

IN SIGHT OF WALLACE'S TOWER.

—How Wallace fought for Scotland, left the name
 Of Wallace to be found, like a wild flower,
 All over his dear Country; left the deeds
 Of Wallace, like a family of ghosts,
 To people the steep rocks and river banks,
 Her natural sanctuaries, with a local soul
 Of independence and stern liberty.*

MS.

LORD of the vale! astounding Flood;
 The dullest leaf in this thick wood
 Quakes—conscious of thy power;
 The caves reply with hollow moan;
 And vibrates, to its central stone,
 Yon time-cemented Tower!

And yet how fair the rural scene!
 For thou, O Clyde, hast ever been
 Beneficent as strong;
 Pleased in refreshing dews to steep
 The little trembling flowers that peep
 Thy shelving rocks among.

Hence all who love their country, love
 To look on thee—delight to rove
 Where they thy voice can hear;
 And, to the patriot-warrior's Shade,
 Lord of the vale! to Heroes laid
 In dust, that voice is dear!

Along thy banks, at dead of night
 Sweeps visibly the Wallace Wight;
 Or stands, in warlike vest,
 Aloft, beneath the moon's pale beam,
 A Champion worthy of the stream,
 Yon grey tower's living crest!

But clouds and envious darkness hide
 A Form not doubtfully desried:—
 Their transient mission o'er,
 O say to what blind region flee
 These Shapes of awful phantasy?
 To what untrodden shore?

Less than divine command they spurn;
 But this we from the mountains learn,
 And this the valleys show;
 That never will they deign to hold
 Communion where the heart is cold
 To human weal and woe.

The man of abject soul in vain
 Shall walk the Marathonian plain;
 Or thrird the shadowy gloom,
 That still invests the guardian Pass,
 Where stood, sublime, Leonidas
 Devoted to the tomb.

And let no Slave his head incline,
 Or kneel, before the votive shrine
 By Uri's lake, where Tell
 Leapt, from his storm-vest boat, to land,
 Heaven's Instrument, for by his hand
 That day the Tyrant fell.

III.

EFFUSION,

IN THE PLEASURE-GROUND ON THE BANKS OF THE BRAN,
NEAR DUNKELD.

'The waterfall, by a loud roaring, warned us when we must expect it. We were first, however, conducted into a small apartment, where the Gardener desired us to look at a picture of Ossian, which, while he was telling the story of the young Artist who executed the work, disappeared, parting in the middle—flying asunder as by the touch of magic—and lo! we are at the entrance of a splendid apartment, which was almost dizzy and alive with waterfalls, that tumbled in all directions; the great cascade, opposite the window, which faced us, being reflected in innumerable mirrors upon the ceiling and against the walls.'—*Extract from the Journal of my Fellow-traveller.*

WHAT He—who, mid the kindred throng
Of Heroes that inspired his song,
Doth yet frequent the hill of storms,
The stars dim-twinkling through their forms!
What! Ossian here—a painted Thrall,
Mute fixture on a stuccoed wall;
To serve—an unsuspected screen
For show that must not yet be seen;
And, when the moment comes, to part
And vanish by mysterious art;
Head, harp, and body, split asunder,
For ingress to a world of wonder;
A gay saloon, with waters dancing
Upon the sight wherever glancing;
One loud cascade in front, and lo!
A thousand like it, white as snow—
Streams on the walls, and torrent-foam
As active round the hollow dome,
Illusive cataracts! of their terrors
Not stripped, nor voiceless in the mirrors,
That catch the pageant from the flood
Thundering adown a rocky wood.
What pains to dazzle and confound!
What strife of colour, shape and sound
In this quaint medley, that might seem
Devised out of a sick man's dream!
Strange scene, fantastic and uneasy
As ever made a maniac dizzy,
When disenchanted from the mood
That loves on sullen thoughts to brood!

O Nature—in thy changeful visions,
Through all thy most abrupt transitions
Smooth, graceful, tender, or sublime—
Ever averse to pantomime,

Thee neither do they know nor us
Thy servants, who can trifle thus;
Else verily the sober powers
Of rock that frowns, and stream that roars,
Exalted by congenial sway
Of Spirits, and the undying Lay,
And Names that moulder not away,
Had wakened some redeeming thought
More worthy of this favoured Spot;
Recalled some feeling—to set free
The Bard from such indignity!

* The Effigies of a valiant Wight
I once beheld, a Templar Knight;
Not prostrate, not like those that rest
On tombs, with palms together prest,
But sculptured out of living stone,
And standing upright and alone,
Both hands with rival energy
Employed in setting his sword free
From its dull sheath—stern sentinel
Intent to guard St. Robert's cell;
As if with memory of the affray
Far distant, when, as legends say,
The Monks of Fountain's thronged to force
From its dear home the Hermit's corse,
That in their keeping it might lie,
To crown their abbey's sanctity.
So had they rushed into the grot
Of sense despised, a world forgot,
And torn him from his loved-retreat,
Where altar-stone and rock-hewn seat
Still hint that quiet best is found,
Even by the *Living*, under ground;
But a bold Knight, the selfish aim
Defeating, put the Monks to shame,
There where you see his Image stand
Bare to the sky, with threatening brand
Which lingering Nid is proud to show
Reflected in the pool below.

Thus, like the men of earliest days,
Our sires set forth their grateful praise:
Uncouth the workmanship, and rude!
But, nursed in mountain solitude,
Might some aspiring artist dare
To seize whate'er, through misty air,
A ghost, by glimpses, may present
Of imitable lineament,
And give the phantom an array
That less should scorn the abandoned clay;
Then let him hew with patient stroke
An Ossian out of mural rock,

* On the banks of the River Nid, near Knaresborough.

And leave the figurative Man—
 Upon thy margin, roaring Bran!—
 Fixed, like the Templar of the steep,
 An everlasting watch to keep;
 With local sanctities in trust,
 More precious than a hermit's dust;
 And virtues through the mass infused,
 Which old idolatry abused.

What though the Granite would deny
 All fervour to the sightless eye;
 And touch from rising suns in vain
 Solicit a Memnonian strain;
 Yet, in some fit of anger sharp,
 The wind might force the deep-grooved harp
 To utter melancholy moans
 Not unconnected with the tones
 Of soul-sick flesh and weary bones;
 While grove and river notes would lend,
 Less deeply sad, with these to blend!

Vain pleasures of luxurious life,
 For ever with yourselves at strife;
 Through town and country both deranged
 By affectations interchanged,
 And all the perishable gauds
 That heaven-deserted man applauds;
 When will your hapless patrons learn
 To watch and ponder—to discern
 The freshness, the everlasting youth,
 Of admiration sprung from truth;
 From beauty infinitely growing
 Upon a mind with love o'erflowing—
 To sound the depths of every Art
 That seeks its wisdom through the heart?

Thus (where the intrusive Pile, ill-graced
 With baubles of theatric taste,
 O'erlooks the torrent breathing showers
 On motley bands of alien flowers
 In stiff confusion set or sown,
 Till Nature cannot find her own,
 Or keep a remnant of the sod
 Which Caledonian Heroes trod)
 I mused; and, thirsting for redress,
 Recoiled into the wilderness.

IV.

YARROW VISITED,

SEPTEMBER, 1814.

(See page 225).

AND is this—Yarrow?—*This* the Stream
 Of which my fancy cherished,
 So faithfully, a waking dream?
 An image that hath perished!
 O that some Minstrel's harp were near,
 To utter notes of gladness,
 And chase this silence from the air,
 That fills my heart with sadness!

Yet why?—a silvery current flows
 With uncontrolled meanderings;
 Nor have these eyes by greener hills
 Been soothed, in all my wanderings.
 And, through her depths, Saint Mary's Lake
 Is visibly delighted;
 For not a feature of those hills
 Is in the mirror slighted.

A blue sky bends o'er Yarrow vale,
 Save where that pearly whiteness
 Is round the rising sun diffused,
 A tender hazy brightness;
 Mild dawn of promise! that excludes
 All profitless dejection;
 Though not unwilling here to admit
 A pensive recollection.

Where was it that the famous Flower
 Of Yarrow Vale lay bleeding?
 His bed perchance was yon smooth mound
 On which the herd is feeding:
 And haply from this crystal pool,
 Now peaceful as the morning,
 The Water-wraith ascended thrice—
 And gave his doleful warning.

Delicious is the Lay that sings
 The haunts of happy Lovers,
 The path that leads them to the grove,
 The leafy grove that covers:
 And Pity sanctifies the Verse
 That paints, by strength of sorrow,
 The unconquerable strength of love;
 Bear witness, rueful Yarrow!

But thou, that didst appear so fair
To fond imagination,
Dost rival in the light of day
Her delicate creation :
Meek loveliness is round thee spread,
A softness still and holy ;
The grace of forest charms decayed,
And pastoral melancholy.

That region left, the vale unfolds
Rich groves of lofty stature,
With Yarrow winding through the pomp
Of cultivated nature ;
And, rising from those lofty groves,
Behold a Ruin hoary !
The shattered front of Newark's Towers,
Renowned in Border story.

Fair scenes for childhood's opening bloom,
For sportive youth to stray in ;
For manhood to enjoy his strength ;
And age to wear away in !
Yon cottage seems a bower of bliss,
A covert for protection
Of tender thoughts, that nestle there—
The brood of chaste affection.

How sweet, on this autumnal day,
The wild-wood fruits to gather,
And on my True-love's forehead plant
A crest of blooming heather !
And what if I enwreathed my own !
'Twere no offence to reason ;
The sober Hills thus deck their brows
To meet the wintry season.

I see—but not by sight alone,
Loved Yarrow, have I won thee ;
A ray of fancy still survives—
Her sunshine plays upon thee !
Thy ever-youthful waters keep
A course of lively pleasure ;
And gladsome notes my lips can breathe,
Accordant to the measure.

The vapours linger round the Heights,
They melt, and soon must vanish ;
One hour is theirs, nor more is mine—
Sad thought, which I would banish,
But that I know, where'er I go,
Thy genuine image, Yarrow !
Will dwell with me—to heighten joy,
And cheer my mind in sorrow.

POEMS DEDICATED TO NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE AND LIBERTY.

PART I.

I.

COMPOSED BY THE SEA-SIDE, NEAR CALAIS,
AUGUST, 1802.

FAIR Star of evening, Splendour of the west,
Star of my Country!—on the horizon's brink
Thou hangest, stooping, as might seem, to sink
On England's bosom; yet well pleased to rest,
Meanwhile, and be to her a glorious crest
Conspicuous to the Nations. Thou, I think,
Should'st be my Country's emblem; and should'st
wink,
Bright Star! with laughter on her banners, drest
In thy fresh beauty. There! that dusky spot
Beneath thee, that is England; there she lies.
Blessings be on you both! one hope, one lot,
One life, one glory!—I, with many a fear
For my dear Country, many heartfelt sighs,
Among men who do not love her, linger here.

II.

CALAIS, AUGUST, 1802.

Is it a reed that's shaken by the wind,
Or what is it that ye go forth to see?
Lords, lawyers, statesmen, squires of low degree,
Men known, and men unknown, sick, lame, and
blind,
Post forward all, like creatures of one kind,
With first-fruit offerings crowd to bend the knee
In France, before the new-born Majesty.
'Tis ever thus. Ye men of prostrate mind,
A seemly reverence may be paid to power;
But that's a loyal virtue, never sown
In haste, nor springing with a transient shower:
When truth, when sense, when liberty were frown,
What hardship had it been to wait an hour?
Shame on you, feeble Heads, to slavery prone!

III.

Composed near Calais, on the road leading to Ardres, August 7, 1802.

JONES! as from Calais southward you and I
Went pacing side by side, this public Way
Streamed with the pomp of a too-credulous day*
When faith was pledged to new-born Liberty:
A homeless sound of joy was in the sky:
From hour to hour the antiquated Earth,
Beat like the heart of Man: songs, garlands, mirth
Banners, and happy faces, far and nigh!
And now, sole register that these things were,
Two solitary greetings have I heard,
'Good morrow, Citizen!' a hollow word,
As if a dead man spake it! Yet despair
Touches me not, though pensive as a bird
Whose vernal coverts winter hath laid bare†.

IV.

1801.

I GRIEVED for Buonaparté, with a vain
And an unthinking grief! The tenderest mood
Of that Man's mind—what can it be? what food
Fed his first hopes? what knowledge could he gain
'Tis not in battles that from youth we train
The Governor who must be wise and good,
And temper with the sternness of the brain
Thoughts motherly, and meek as womanhood.
Wisdom doth live with children round her knees
Books, leisure, perfect freedom, and the talk
Man holds with week-day man in the hourly wal
Of the mind's business: these are the degrees
By which true Sway doth mount; this is the sta
True Power doth grow on; and her rights at
these.

* 14th July, 1790.

† See Note.

V.

CALAIS, AUGUST 15, 1802.

FESTIVALS have I seen that were not names :
 This is young Buonaparté's natal day,
 And his is henceforth an established sway—
 Consul for life. With worship France proclaims
 Her approbation, and with pomps and games.
 Heaven grant that other Cities may be gay !
 Calais is not : and I have bent my way
 To the sea-coast, noting that each man frames
 His business as he likes. Far other show
 Thy youth here witnessed, in a prouder time ;
 The senselessness of joy was then sublime !
 Happy is he, who, caring not for Pope,
 Consul, or King, can sound himself to know
 The destiny of Man, and live in hope.

VI.

THE EXTINCTION OF THE VENETIAN REPUBLIC.

Once did She hold the gorgeous east in fee ;
 And was the safeguard of the west : the worth
 Of Venice did not fall below her birth,
 Venice, the eldest Child of Liberty.
 She was a maiden City, bright and free ;
 No guile seduced, no force could violate ;
 And, when she took unto herself a Mate,
 She must espouse the everlasting Sea.
 And what if she had seen those glories fade,
 Those titles vanish, and that strength decay ;
 It shall some tribute of regret be paid
 When her long life hath reached its final day :
 In are we, and must grieve when even the Shade
 Of that which once was great, is passed away.

VII.

THE KING OF SWEDEN.

The Voice of song from distant lands shall call
 That great King ; shall hail the crownèd Youth
 Who, taking counsel of unbending Truth,
 One example hath set forth to all
 How they with dignity may stand ; or fall,
 And all they must. Now, whither doth it tend ?
 What to him and his shall be the end ?
 That thought is one which neither can appal
 Nor cheer him ; for the illustrious Swede hath done
 The thing which ought to be ; is raised above
 The consequences : work he hath begun
 Of fortitude, and piety, and love,
 Which all his glorious ancestors approve :
 O heroes bless him, him their rightful son *.

* See note.

VIII.

TO TOUSSAINT L'OUVERTURE.

TOUSSAINT, the most unhappy man of men !
 Whether the whistling Rustic tend his plough
 Within thy hearing, or thy head be now
 Pillowed in some deep dungeon's earless den ;—
 O miserable Chieftain ! where and when
 Wilt thou find patience ? Yet die not ; do thou
 Wear rather in thy bonds a cheerful brow :
 Though fallen thyself, never to rise again,
 Live, and take comfort. Thou hast left behind
 Powers that will work for thee ; air, earth, and skies ;
 There's not a breathing of the common wind
 That will forget thee ; thou hast great allies ;
 Thy friends are exultations, agonies,
 And love, and man's unconquerable mind.

IX.

SEPTEMBER 1, 1802.

Among the capricious acts of tyranny that disgraced those times, was
 the chasing of all Negroes from France by decree of the govern-
 ment : we had a Fellow-passenger who was one of the expelled.

We had a female Passenger who came
 From Calais with us, spotless in array,—
 A white-robed Negro, like a lady gay,
 Yet downcast as a woman fearing blame ;
 Meek, destitute, as seemed, of hope or aim
 She sat, from notice turning not away,
 But on all proffered intercourse did lay
 A weight of languid speech, or to the same
 No sign of answer made by word or face :
 Yet still her eyes retained their tropic fire,
 That, burning independent of the mind,
 Joined with the lustre of her rich attire
 To mock the Outcast—O ye Heavens, be kind !
 And feel, thou Earth, for this afflicted Race !

X.

COMPOSED IN THE VALLEY NEAR DOVER, ON THE
DAY OF LANDING.

HERE, on our native soil, we breathe once more.
 The cock that crows, the smoke that curls, that sound
 Of bells ;—those boys who in yon meadow-ground
 In white-sleeved shirts are playing ; and the roar
 Of the waves breaking on the chalky shore ;—
 All, all are English. Oft have I looked round
 With joy in Kent's green vales ; but never found
 Myself so satisfied in heart before.
 Europe is yet in bonds ; but let that pass,
 Thought for another moment. Thou art free,
 My Country ! and 'tis joy enough and pride
 For one hour's perfect bliss, to tread the grass
 Of England once again, and hear and see,
 With such a dear Companion at my side.

XI.

SEPTEMBER, 1802. NEAR DOVER.

INLAND, within a hollow vale, I stood ;
 And saw, while sea was calm and air was clear,
 The coast of France—the coast of France how near !
 Drawn almost into frightful neighbourhood.
 I shrunk ; for verily the barrier flood
 Was like a lake, or river bright and fair,
 A span of waters ; yet what power is there !
 What mightiness for evil and for good !
 Even so doth God protect us if we be
 Virtuous and wise. Winds blow, and waters roll,
 Strength to the brave, and Power, and Deity ;
 Yet in themselves are nothing ! One decree
 Spake laws to *them*, and said that by the soul
 Only, the Nations shall be great and free.

XII.

THOUGHT OF A BRITON ON THE SUBJUGATION OF
SWITZERLAND.

Two Voices are there ; one is of the sea,
 One of the mountains ; each a mighty Voice :
 In both from age to age thou didst rejoice,
 They were thy chosen music, Liberty !
 There came a Tyrant, and with holy glee
 Thou fought'st against him ; but hast vainly striven :
 Thou from thy Alpine holds at length art driven,
 Where not a torrent murmurs heard by thee.
 Of one deep bliss thine ear hath been bereft :
 Then cleave, O cleave to that which still is left ;
 For, high-souled Maid, what sorrow would it be
 That Mountain floods should thunder as before,
 And Ocean bellow from his rocky shore,
 And neither awful Voice be heard by thee !

XIII.

WRITTEN IN LONDON, SEPTEMBER, 1802.

O FRIEND ! I know not which way I must look
 For comfort, being, as I am, oppress'd,
 To think that now our life is only dress
 For show ; mean handy-work of craftsman, cook,
 Or groom !—We must run glittering like a brook
 In the open sunshine, or we are unblest :
 The wealthiest man among us is the best :
 No grandeur now in nature or in book
 Delights us. Rapine, avarice, expense,
 This is idolatry ; and these we adore :
 Plain living and high thinking are no more :
 The homely beauty of the good old cause
 Is gone ; our peace, our fearful innocence,
 And pure religion breathing household laws.

XIV.

LONDON, 1802.

MILTON ! thou should'st be living at this hour :
 England hath need of thee : she is a fen
 Of stagnant waters : altar, sword, and pen,
 Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower,
 Have forfeited their ancient English dower
 Of inward happiness. We are selfish men ;
 Oh ! raise us up, return to us again ;
 And give us manners, virtue, freedom, power.
 Thy soul was like a Star, and dwelt apart :
 Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea :
 Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free,
 So didst thou travel on life's common way,
 In cheerful godliness ; and yet thy heart
 The lowliest duties on herself did lay.

XV.

GREAT men have been among us ; hands that penned
 And tongues that uttered wisdom—better none :
 The later Sidney, Marvel, Harrington,
 Young Vane, and others who called Milton friend.
 These moralists could act and comprehend :
 They knew how genuine glory was put on ;
 Taught us how rightfully a nation shone
 In splendour : what strength was, that would not
 bend

But in magnanimous meekness. France, 'tis strange,
 Hath brought forth no such souls as we had then.
 Perpetual emptiness ! unceasing change !
 No single volume paramount, no code,
 No master spirit, no determined road ;
 But equally a want of books and men !

XVI.

It is not to be thought of that the Flood
 Of British freedom, which, to the open sea
 Of the world's praise, from dark antiquity
 Hath flowed, ' with pomp of waters, unwitsood ;'
 Roused though it be full often to a mood
 Which spurns the check of salutary hands,
 That this most famous Stream in bogs and sands
 Should perish ; and to evil and to good
 Be lost for ever. In our halls is hung
 Armoury of the invincible Knights of old :
 We must be free or die, who speak the tongue
 That Shakspeare spake ; the faith and morale hol
 Which Milton held.—In every thing we are spru
 Of Earth's first blood, have titles manifold.

XVII.

WHEN I have borne in memory what has tamed
 Great Nations, how ennobling thoughts depart
 When men change swords for ledgers, and desert
 The student's bower for gold, some fears unnamed
 And, my Country!—am I to be blamed?
 Now, when I think of thee, and what thou art,
 Truly, in the bottom of my heart,
 Those unfilial fears I am ashamed.
 Or dearly must we prize thee; we who find
 Thee a bulwark for the cause of men;
 And I by my affection was beguiled:
 What wonder if a Poet now and then,
 Among the many movements of his mind,
 Call thee for thee as a lover or a child!

XVIII.

OCTOBER, 1803.

WE might believe that natural miseries
 Had blasted France, and made of it a land
 Fit for men; and that in one great band
 Her sons were bursting forth, to dwell at ease.
 But 'tis a chosen soil, where sun and breeze
 Shed gentle favours: rural works are there,
 And ordinary business without care;
 Not rich in all things that can soothe and please!
 How piteous then that there should be such dearth
 Of knowledge; that whole myriads should unite
 To work against themselves such fell despite:
 Could come in phrensy and in drunken mirth,
 Impatient to put out the only light
 (Liberty that yet remains on earth!

XIX.

THERE is a bondage worse, far worse, to bear
 Than his who breathes, by roof and floor, and wall,
 But in, a Tyrant's solitary Thrall:
 To his who walks about in the open air,
 Of a Nation who, henceforth, must wear
 Their fetters in their souls. For who could be,
 No, even the best, in such condition, free
 From self-reproach, reproach that he must share
 With Human-nature? Never be it ours
 To see the sun how brightly it will shine,
 All know that noble feelings, manly powers,
 Head of gathering strength, must droop and pine;
 All earth with all her pleasant fruits and flowers
 Lie, and participate in man's decline.

XX.

OCTOBER, 1803.

THESE times strike monied worldlings with dismay:
 Even rich men, brave by nature, taint the air
 With words of apprehension and despair:
 While tens of thousands, thinking on the affray,
 Men unto whom sufficient for the day
 And minds not stinted or untilled are given,
 Sound, healthy, children of the God of heaven,
 Are cheerful as the rising sun in May.
 What do we gather hence but firmer faith
 That every gift of noble origin
 Is breathed upon by Hope's perpetual breath;
 That virtue and the faculties within
 Are vital,—and that riches are akin
 To fear, to change, to cowardice, and death?

XXI.

ENGLAND! the time is come when thou should'st
 wean

Thy heart from its emasculating food;
 The truth should now be better understood;
 Old things have been unsettled; we have seen
 Fair seed-time, better harvest might have been
 But for thy trespasses; and, at this day,
 If for Greece, Egypt, India, Africa,
 Aught good were destined, thou would'st step
 between.

England! all nations in this charge agree:
 But worse, more ignorant in love and hate,
 Far—far more abject, is thine Enemy:
 Therefore the wise pray for thee, though the freight
 Of thy offences be a heavy weight:
 Oh grief that Earth's best hopes rest all with Thee!

XXII.

OCTOBER, 1803.

WHEN, looking on the present face of things,
 I see one Man, of men the meanest too!
 Raised up to sway the world, to do, undo,
 With mighty Nations for his underlings,
 The great events with which old story rings
 Seem vain and hollow; I find nothing great:
 Nothing is left which I can venerate;
 So that a doubt almost within me springs
 Of Providence, such emptiness at length
 Seems at the heart of all things. But, great God!
 I measure back the steps which I have trod;
 And tremble, seeing whence proceeds the strength
 Of such poor Instruments, with thoughts sublime
 I tremble at the sorrow of the time.

XXIII.

TO THE MEN OF KENT. OCTOBER, 1803.

VANGUARD of Liberty, ye men of Kent,
 Ye children of a Soil that doth advance
 Her haughty brow against the coast of France,
 Now is the time to prove your hardiment !
 To France be words of invitation sent !
 They from their fields can see the countenance
 Of your fierce war, may ken the glittering lance,
 And hear you shouting forth your brave intent.
 Left single, in bold parley, ye, of yore,
 Did from the Norman win a gallant wreath ;
 Confirmed the charters that were yours before ;—
 No parleying now ! In Britain is one breath ;
 We all are with you now from shore to shore :—
 Ye men of Kent, 'tis victory or death !

XXIV.

WHAT if our numbers barely could defy
 The arithmetic of babes, must foreign hordes,
 Slaves, vile as ever were befooled by words,
 Striking through English breasts the anarchy
 Of Terror, bear us to the ground, and tie
 Our hands behind our backs with felon cords ?
 Yields every thing to discipline of swords ?
 Is man as good as man, none low, none high ?—
 Nor discipline nor valour can withstand
 The shock, nor quell the inevitable rout,
 When in some great extremity breaks out
 A people, on their own beloved Land
 Risen, like one man, to combat in the sight
 Of a just God for liberty and right.

XXV.

LINES ON THE EXPECTED INVASION.

1803.

COME ye—who, if (which Heaven avert !) the Land
 Were with herself at strife, would take your stand,
 Like gallant Falkland, by the Monarch's side,
 And, like Montrose, make Loyalty your pride—
 Come ye—who, not less zealous, might display
 Banners at enmity with regal sway,
 And, like the Pym and Miltons of that day,
 Think that a State would live in sounder health
 If Kingship bowed its head to Commonwealth—
 Ye too—whom no discreditable fear
 Would keep, perhaps with many a fruitless tear,
 Uncertain what to choose and how to steer—
 And ye—who might mistake for sober sense
 And wise reserve the plea of indolence—

Come ye—whate'er your creed—O waken all,
 Whate'er your temper, at your Country's call ;
 Resolving (this a free-born Nation can)
 To have one Soul, and perish to a man,
 Or save this honoured Land from every Lord
 But British reason and the British sword.

XXVI.

ANTICIPATION. OCTOBER, 1803.

SHOUT, for a mighty Victory is won !
 On British ground the Invaders are laid low ;
 The breath of Heaven has drifted them like snow
 And left them lying in the silent sun,
 Never to rise again !—the work is done.
 Come forth, ye old men, now in peaceful show
 And greet your sons ! drums beat and trumpets blow
 Make merry, wives ! ye little children, stun
 Your grandame's ears with pleasure of your noise
 Clap, infants, clap your hands ! Divine must be
 That triumph, when the very worst, the pain,
 And even the prospect of our brethren slain,
 Hath something in it which the heart enjoys :—
 In glory will they sleep and endless sanctity.

XXVII.

NOVEMBER, 1806.

ANOTHER year !—another deadly blow !
 Another mighty Empire overthrown !
 And We are left, or shall be left, alone ;
 The last that dare to struggle with the Foe.
 'Tis well ! from this day forward we shall know
 That in ourselves our safety must be sought ;
 That by our own right hands it must be wrought
 That we must stand unproped, or be laid low.
 O dastard whom such foretaste doth not cheer !
 We shall exult, if they who rule the land
 Be men who hold its many blessings dear,
 Wise, upright, valiant ; not a servile band,
 Who are to judge of danger which they fear,
 And honour which they do not understand.

XXVIII.

O D E.

I.

Who rises on the banks of Seine,
 And binds her temples with the civic wreath !
 What joy to read the promise of her mien !
 How sweet to rest her wide-spread wings beneath !

But they are ever playing,
And twinkling in the light,
And, if a breeze be straying,
That breeze she will invite ;

and stands on tiptoe, conscious she is fair,
and calls a look of love into her face,
and spreads her arms, as if the general air
alone could satisfy her wide embrace.
—Melt, Principalities, before her melt !
Her love ye hailed—her wrath have felt !
But She through many a change of form hath gone,
and stands amidst you now an armed creature,
whose panoply is not a thing put on,
but the live scales of a portentous nature ;
that, having forced its way from birth to birth,
talks round—abhorred by Heaven, a terror to
the Earth !

II.

I marked the breathings of her dragon crest ;
My Soul, a sorrowful interpreter,
in many a midnight vision bowed
before the ominous aspect of her spear ;
Whether the mighty beam, in scorn upheld,
threatened her foes,—or, pompously at rest,
seemed to bisect her orb'd shield,
as stretches a blue bar of solid cloud
across the setting sun and all the fiery west.

III.

So did she daunt the Earth, and God defy !
and, wheresoe'er she spread her sovereignty,
pollution tainted all that was most pure.
Have we not known—and live we not to tell—
that Justice seemed to hear her final knell ?
With buried deeper in her own deep breast
her stores, and sighed to find them insecure !
and Hope was maddened by the drops that fell
from shades, her chosen place of short-lived rest.
The same followed shame, and woe supplanted woe—
this the only change that time can show ?
How long shall vengeance sleep ? Ye patient
Heavens, how long ?

Infirm ejaculation ! from the tongue
Nations wanting virtue to be strong
to the measure of accorded might,
and daring not to feel the majesty of right !

IV.

Weak Spirits are there—who would ask,
upon the pressure of a painful thing,
the lion's sinews, or the eagle's wing ;
let their wishes loose, in forest-glade,
Among the lurking powers
Of herbs and lowly flowers,
seek, from saints above, miraculous aid—

That Man may be accomplished for a task
Which his own nature hath enjoined ;—and why ?
If, when that interference hath relieved him,
He must sink down to languish
In worse than former helplessness—and lie
Till the caves roar,—and, imbecility
Again engendering anguish, [ceived him.
The same weak wish returns, that had before de-

V.

But Thou, supreme Disposer ! may'st not speed
The course of things, and change the creed
Which hath been held aloft before men's sight
Since the first framing of societies,
Whether, as bards have told in ancient song,
Built up by soft seducing harmonies ;
Or prest together by the appetite,
And by the power, of wrong.

PART II.

I.

ON A CELEBRATED EVENT IN ANCIENT HISTORY.

A ROMAN Master stands on Grecian ground,
And to the people at the Isthmian Games
Assembled, He, by a herald's voice, proclaims
THE LIBERTY OF GREECE :—the words rebound
Until all voices in one voice are drowned ;
Glad acclamation by which air was rent !
And birds, high flying in the element,
Dropped to the earth, astonished at the sound !
Yet were the thoughtful grieved ; and still that voice
Haunts, with sad echoes, musing Fancy's ear :
Ah ! that a *Conqueror's* words should be so dear :
Ah ! that a *boon* could shed such rapturous joys !
A gift of that which is not to be given
By all the blended powers of Earth and Heaven.

II.

UPON THE SAME EVENT.

WHEN, far and wide, swift as the beams of morn
The tidings passed of servitude repealed,
And of that joy which shook the Isthmian Field,
The rough Ætolians smiled with bitter scorn.
" 'Tis known," cried they, "that he, who would adorn
His envied temples with the Isthmian crown,
Must either win, through effort of his own,
The prize, or be content to see it worn
By more deserving brows.—Yet so ye prop,
Sons of the brave who fought at Marathon,
Your feeble spirits ! Greece her head hath bowed,
As if the wreath of liberty thereon
Would fix itself as smoothly as a cloud,
Which, at Jove's will, descends on Pelion's top."

III.

TO THOMAS CLARKSON, ON THE FINAL PASSING OF THE
BILL FOR THE ABOLITION OF THE SLAVE TRADE.

March, 1807.

CLARKSON ! it was an obstinate hill to climb :
How toilsome—nay, how dire—it was, by thee
Is known ; by none, perhaps, so feelingly :
But thou, who, starting in thy fervent prime,
Didst first lead forth that enterprise sublime,
Hast heard the constant Voice its charge repeat,
Which, out of thy young heart's oracular seat,
First roused thee.—O true yoke-fellow of Time,
Duty's intrepid liegeman, see, the palm
Is won, and by all Nations shall be worn !
The blood-stained Writing is for ever torn ;
And thou henceforth wilt have a good man's calm,
A great man's happiness ; thy zeal shall find
Repose at length, firm friend of human kind !

IV.

A PROPHECY. FEBRUARY, 1807.

HIGH deeds, O Germans, are to come from you !
Thus in your books the record shall be found,
'A watchword was pronounced, a potent sound—
ARMINUS !—all the people quaked like dew
Stirred by the breeze ; they rose, a Nation, true,
True to herself—the mighty Germany,
She of the Danube and the Northern Sea,
She rose, and off at once the yoke she threw.
All power was given her in the dreadful trance ;
Those new-born Kings she withered like a flame.'
—Woe to them all ! but heaviest woe and shame
To that Bavarian who could first advance
His banner in accursed league with France,
First open traitor to the German name !

V.

COMPOSED BY THE SIDE OF GRASMERE LAKE.

1807.

CLOUDS, lingering yet, extend in solid bars
Through the grey west ; and lo ! these waters, steeled
By breezeless air to smoothest polish, yield
A vivid repetition of the stars ;
Jove, Venus, and the ruddy crest of Mars
Amid his fellows beauteously revealed
At happy distance from earth's groaning field,
Where ruthless mortals wage incessant wars.
Is it a mirror !—or the nether Sphere
Opening to view the abyss in which she feeds
Her own calm fires !—But list ! a voice is near ;
Great Pan himself low-whispering through the
"Be thankful, thou ; for, if unholy deeds [reads,
Ravage the world, tranquillity is here !"

VI.

Go back to antique ages, if thine eyes
The genuine mien and character would trace
Of the rash Spirit that still holds her place,
Prompting the world's audacious vanities !
Go back, and see the Tower of Babel rise ;
The pyramid extend its monstrous base,
For some Aspirant of our short-lived race,
Anxious an aery name to immortalize.
There, too, ere wiles and politic dispute
Gave specious colouring to aim and act,
See the first mighty Hunter leave the brute—
To chase mankind, with men in armies packed
For his field-pastime high and absolute,
While, to dislodge his game, cities are sacked !

VII.

COMPOSED WHILE THE AUTHOR WAS ENGAGED IN
WRITING A TRACT, OCCASIONED BY THE CONVEN-
TION OF CINTRA.

1808.

Nor 'mid the World's vain objects that enslave
The free-born Soul—that World whose vaunted skill
In selfish interest perverts the will,
Whose factions lead astray the wise and brave—
Not there ; but in dark wood and rocky cave,
And hollow vale which foaming torrents fill
With omnipresent murmur as they rave
Down their steep beds, that never shall be still :
Here, mighty Nature ! in this school sublime
I weigh the hopes and fears of suffering Spain ;
For her consult the auguries of time,
And through the human heart explore my way ;
And look and listen—gathering, whence I may,
Triumph, and thoughts no bondage can restrain.

VIII.

COMPOSED AT THE SAME TIME AND ON THE SAME
OCCASION.

I DROPPED my pen ; and listened to the Wind
That sang of trees up-torn and vessels tost—
A midnight harmony ; and wholly lost
To the general sense of men by chains confined
Of business, care, or pleasure ; or resigned
To timely sleep. Thought I, the impassioned strain
Which, without aid of numbers, I sustain,
Like acceptance from the World will find.
Yet some with apprehensive ear shall drink
A dirge devoutly breathed o'er sorrows past ;
And to the attendant promise will give heed—
The prophecy,—like that of this wild blast,
Which, while it makes the heart with sadness shrink
Tells also of bright calms that shall succeed.

IX.

HOFFER.

Of mortal parents is the Hero born
 By whom the undaunted Tyrolese are led ?
 Is it Tell's great Spirit, from the dead
 Returned to animate an age forlorn ?
 He comes like Phœbus through the gates of morn
 When dreary darkness is discomfited,
 Let mark his modest state ! upon his head,
 That simple crest, a heron's plume, is worn.
 Liberty ! they stagger at the shock
 From van to rear—and with one mind would flee,
 At half their host is buried :—rock on rock
 Descends :—beneath this godlike Warrior, see !
 Hills, torrents, woods, embodied to bemock
 The Tyrant, and confound his cruelty.

X.

ADVANCE—come forth from thy Tyrolean ground,
 Dear Liberty ! stern Nymph of soul untamed ;
 Meet Nymph, O rightly of the mountains named !
 Through the long chain of Alps from mound to
 mound
 And o'er the eternal snows, like Echo, bound ;
 Meet Echo, when the hunter train at dawn
 Have roused her from her sleep : and forest-lawn,
 Hills, woods and caves, her viewless steps resound
 And babble of her pastime !—On, dread Power !
 With such invisible motion speed thy flight,
 Through hanging clouds, from craggy height to
 height,
 Through the green vales and through the herds-
 man's bower—
 That all the Alps may gladden in thy might,
 Here, there, and in all places at one hour.

XI.

FEELINGS OF THE TYROLESE.

THE Land we from our fathers had in trust,
 And to our children will transmit, or die :
 This is our maxim, this our piety ;
 And God and Nature say that it is just.
 That which we *would* perform in arms—we must !
 We read the dictate in the infant's eye ;
 In the wife's smile ; and in the placid sky ;
 And, at our feet, amid the silent dust
 Of them that were before us.—Sing aloud
 And songs, the precious music of the heart !
 Live, herds and flocks, your voices to the wind !
 While we go forth, a self-devoted crowd,
 With weapons grasped in fearless hands, to assert
 Our virtue, and to vindicate mankind.

XII.

ALAS ! what boots the long laborious quest
 Of moral prudence, sought through good and ill ;
 Or pains abstruse—to elevate the will,
 And lead us on to that transcendent rest
 Where every passion shall the sway attest
 Of Reason, seated on her sovereign hill ;
 What is it but a vain and curious skill,
 If sapient Germany must lie deprest,
 Beneath the brutal sword ?—Her haughty Schools
 Shall blush ; and may not we with sorrow say,
 A few strong instincts and a few plain rules,
 Among the herdsmen of the Alps, have wrought
 More for mankind at this unhappy day
 Than all the pride of intellect and thought ?

XIII.

AND is it among rude untutored Dales,
 There, and there only, that the heart is true ?
 And, rising to repel or to subdue,
 Is it by rocks and woods that man prevails ?
 Ah no ! though Nature's dread protection fails,
 There is a bulwark in the soul. This knew
 Iberian Burghers when the sword they drew
 In Zaragoza, naked to the gales
 Of fiercely-breathing war. The truth was felt
 By Palafox, and many a brave compeer,
 Like him of noble birth and noble mind ;
 By ladies, meek-eyed women without fear ;
 And wanderers of the street, to whom is dealt
 The bread which without industry they find.

XIV.

O'ER the wide earth, on mountain and on plain,
 Dwells in the affections and the soul of man
 A Godhead, like the universal PAN ;
 But more exalted, with a brighter train :
 And shall his bounty be dispensed in vain,
 Showered equally on city and on field,
 And neither hope nor steadfast promise yield
 In these usurping times of fear and pain ?
 Such doom awaits us. Nay, forbid it Heaven !
 We know the arduous strife, the eternal laws
 To which the triumph of all good is given,
 High sacrifice, and labour without pause,
 Even to the death :—else wherefore should the eye
 Of man converse with immortality ?

XV.

ON THE FINAL SUBMISSION OF THE TYROLESE.

It was a *moral* end for which they fought ;
 Else how, when mighty Thrones were put to shame,
 Could they, poor Shepherds, have preserved an aim,
 A resolution, or enlivening thought ?
 Nor hath that moral good been *vainly* sought ;
 For in their magnanimity and fame
 Powers have they left, an impulse, and a claim
 Which neither can be overturned nor bought.
 Sleep, Warriors, sleep ! among your hills repose !
 We know that ye, beneath the stern control
 Of awful prudence, keep the unvanquished soul :
 And when, impatient of her guilt and woes,
 Europe breaks forth ; then, Shepherds ! shall ye
 rise
 For perfect triumph o'er your Enemies.

XVI.

HAIL, Zaragoza ! If with unwet eye
 We can approach, thy sorrow to behold,
 Yet is the heart not pitiless nor cold ;
 Such spectacle demands not tear or sigh.
 These desolate remains are trophies high
 Of more than martial courage in the breast
 Of peaceful civic virtue : they attest
 Thy matchless worth to all posterity.
 Blood flowed before thy sight without remorse ;
 Disease consumed thy vitals ; War upheaved
 The ground beneath thee with volcanic force :
 Dread trials ! yet encountered and sustained
 Till not a wreck of help or hope remained,
 And law was from necessity received.

XVII.

SAY, what is Honour ?—'Tis the finest sense
 Of *justice* which the human mind can frame,
 Intent each lurking frailty to disclaim,
 And guard the way of life from all offence
 Suffered or done. When lawless violence
 Invades a Realm, so pressed that in the scale
 Of perilous war her weightiest armies fail,
 Honour is hopeful elevation,—whence
 Glory, and triumph. Yet with politic skill
 Endangered States may yield to terms unjust ;
 Stoop their proud heads, but not unto the dust—
 A Foe's most favourite purpose to fulfil :
 Happy occasions oft by self-mistrust
 Are forfeited ; but infamy doth kill.

XVIII.

THE martial courage of a day is vain,
 An empty noise of death the battle's roar,
 If vital hope be wanting to restore,
 Or fortitude be wanting to sustain,
 Armies or kingdoms. We have heard a strain
 Of triumph, how the labouring Danube bore
 A weight of hostile corpses : drenched with gore
 Were the wide fields, the hamlets heaped with slain.
 Yet see (the mighty tumult overpast)
 Austria a Daughter of her Throne hath sold !
 And her Tyrolean Champion we behold
 Murdered, like one ashore by shipwreck cast,
 Murdered without relief. Oh ! blind as bold,
 To think that such assurance can stand fast !

XIX.

BRAVE Schill ! by death delivered, take thy flight
 From Prussia's timid region. Go, and rest
 With heroes, 'mid the islands of the Blest,
 Or in the fields of empyrean light.
 A meteor wert thou crossing a dark night :
 Yet shall thy name, conspicuous and sublime,
 Stand in the spacious firmament of time,
 Fixed as a star : such glory is thy right.
 Alas ! it may not be : for earthly fame
 Is Fortune's frail dependant ; yet there lives
 A Judge, who, as man claims by merit, gives ;
 To whose all-pondering mind a noble aim,
 Faithfully kept, is as a noble deed ;
 In whose pure sight all virtue doth succeed.

XX.

CALL not the royal Swede unfortunate,
 Who never did to Fortune bend the knee ;
 Who slighted fear ; rejected steadfastly
 Temptation ; and whose kingly name and state
 Have 'perished by his choice, and not his fate !'
 Hence lives He, to his inner self endeared ;
 And hence, wherever virtue is revered,
 He sits a more exalted Potentate,
 Throned in the hearts of men. Should Heaven
 ordain
 That this great Servant of a righteous cause
 Must still have sad or vexing thoughts to endure,
 Yet may a sympathising spirit pause,
 Admonished by these truths, and quench all pain
 In thankful joy and gratulation pure*.

* See Note to Sonnet VII. page 237.

XXI.

Look now on that Adventurer who hath paid
His vows to Fortune ; who, in cruel slight
Of virtuous hope, of liberty, and right,
Hath followed wheresoe'er a way was made
By the blind Goddess,—ruthless, undismayed ;
And so hath gained at length a prosperous height,
Round which the elements of worldly might
Beneath his haughty feet, like clouds, are laid.
O joyless power that stands by lawless force !
Curses are *his* dire portion, scorn, and hate,
Internal darkness and unquiet breath ;
And, if old judgments keep their sacred course,
Him from that height shall Heaven precipitate
By violent and ignominious death.

XXII.

Is there a power that can sustain and cheer
The captive chieftain, by a tyrant's doom,
Forced to descend into his destined tomb—
A dungeon dark ! where he must waste the year,
And lie cut off from all his heart holds dear ;
What time his injured country is a stage
Whereon deliberate Valour and the rage
Of righteous Vengeance side by side appear,
Filling from morn to night the heroic scene
With deeds of hope and everlasting praise :—
Say can he think of this with mind serene
And silent fetters ? Yes, if visions bright
Shine on his soul, reflected from the days
When he himself was tried in open light.

XXIII.

1810.

Ah ! where is Palafox ? Nor tongue nor pen
Reports of him, his dwelling or his grave !
Does yet the unheard-of vessel ride the wave ?
Or is she swallowed up, remote from ken
Of pitying human-nature ? Once again
He thinks that we shall hail thee, Champion brave,
Redeemed to baffle that imperial Slave,
And through all Europe cheer desponding men
With new-born hope. Unbounded is the might
Of martyrdom, and fortitude, and right.
Hark, how thy Country triumphs !—Smilingly
The Eternal looks upon her sword that gleams,
Like his own lightning, over mountains high,
On rampart, and the banks of all her streams.

XXIV.

IN due observance of an ancient rite,
The rude Biscayans, when their children lie
Dead in the sinless time of infancy,
Attire the peaceful corse in vestments white ;
And, in like sign of cloudless triumph bright,
They bind the unoffending creature's brows
With happy garlands of the pure white rose :
Then do a festal company unite
In choral song ; and, while the uplifted cross
Of Jesus goes before, the child is borne
Uncovered to his grave : 'tis closed,—her loss
The Mother *then* mourns, as she needs must mourn ;
But soon, through Christian faith, is grief subdued ;
And joy returns, to brighten fortitude.

XXV.

FEELINGS OF A NOBLE BISCAYAN AT ONE OF
THOSE FUNERALS.

1810.

Yet, yet, Biscayans ! we must meet our Foes
With firmer soul, yet labour to regain
Our ancient freedom ; else 'twere worse than vain
To gather round the bier these festal shows.
A garland fashioned of the pure white rose
Becomes not one whose father is a slave :
Oh, bear the infant covered to his grave !
These venerable mountains now enclose
A people sunk in apathy and fear.
If this endure, farewell, for us, all good !
The awful light of heavenly innocence
Will fail to illuminate the infant's bier ;
And guilt and shame, from which is no defence,
Descend on all that issues from our blood.

XXVI.

THE OAK OF GUERNICA.

The ancient oak of Guernica, says Laborde in his account of Biscay, is a most venerable natural monument. Ferdinand and Isabella, in the year 1476, after hearing mass in the church of Santa Maria de la Antigua, repaired to this tree, under which they swore to the Biscayans to maintain their *fueros* (privileges). What other interest belongs to it in the minds of this people will appear from the following

SUPPOSED ADDRESS TO THE SAME. 1810.

OAK of Guernica ! Tree of holier power
Than that which in Dodona did enshrine
(So faith too fondly deemed) a voice divine
Heard from the depths of its ærial bower—
How canst thou flourish at this blighting hour ?
What hope, what joy can sunshine bring to thee,
Or the soft breezes from the Atlantic sea,
The dews of morn, or April's tender shower ?
Stroke merciful and welcome would that be
Which should extend thy branches on the ground,

If never more within their shady round
Those lofty-minded Lawgivers shall meet,
Peasant and lord, in their appointed seat,
Guardians of Biscay's ancient liberty.

XXVII.

INDIGNATION OF A HIGH-MINDED SPANIARD.

1810.

We can endure that He should waste our lands,
Despoil our temples, and by sword and flame
Return us to the dust from which we came ;
Such food a Tyrant's appetite demands :
And we can brook the thought that by his hands
Spain may be overpowered, and he possess,
For his delight, a solemn wilderness
Where all the brave lie dead. But, when of bands
Which he will break for us he dares to speak,
Of benefits, and of a future day
When our enlightened minds shall bless his sway ;
Then, the strained heart of fortitude proves weak ;
Our groans, our blushes, our pale cheeks declare
That he has power to inflict what we lack strength
to bear.

XXVIII.

AVAUNT all specious pliancy of mind
In men of low degree, all smooth pretence !
I better like a blunt indifference,
And self-respecting slowness, disinclined
To win me at first sight : and be there joined
Patience and temperance with this high reserve,
Honour that knows the path and will not swerve ;
Affections, which, if put to proof, are kind ;
And piety towards God. Such men of old
Were England's native growth ; and, throughout
Spain,

(Thanks to high God) forests of such remain :
Then for that Country let our hopes be bold ;
For matched with these shall policy prove vain,
Her arts, her strength, her iron, and her gold.

XXIX.

1810.

O'ERWEENING Statesmen have full long relied
On fleets and armies, and external wealth :
But from *within* proceeds a Nation's health ;
Which shall not fail, though poor men cleave with
pride
To the paternal floor ; or turn aside,
In the thronged city, from the walks of gain,
As being all unworthy to detain
A Soul by contemplation sanctified.

There are who cannot languish in this strife,
Spaniards of every rank, by whom the good
Of such high course was felt and understood ;
Who to their Country's cause have bound a life
Erewhile, by solemn consecration, given
To labour, and to prayer, to nature, and to heaven*.

XXX.

THE FRENCH AND THE SPANISH GUERRILLAS.

HUNGER, and sultry heat, and nipping blast
From bleak hill-top, and length of march by night
Through heavy swamp, or over snow-clad height—
These hardships ill-sustained, these dangers past,
The roving Spanish Bands are reached at last,
Charged, and dispersed like foam : but as a flight
Of scattered quails by signs do reunite,
So these,—and, heard of once again, are chased
With combinations of long-practised art
And newly-kindled hope ; but they are fled—
Gone are they, viewless as the buried dead :
Wherewith?—Their sword is at the Foeman's heart!
And thus from year to year his walk they thwart,
And hang like dreams around his guilty bed.

XXXI.

SPANISH GUERRILLAS.

1811.

THEY seek, are sought ; to daily battle led,
Shrink not, though far outnumbered by their Foes,
For they have learnt to open and to close
The ridges of grim war ; and at their head
Are captains such as erst their country bred
Or fostered, self-supported chiefs,—like those
Whom hardy Rome was fearful to oppose ;
Whose desperate shock the Carthaginian fled.
In One who lived unknown a shepherd's life
Redoubted Viriatus breathes again ;
And Mina, nourished in the studious shade,
With that great Leader† vies, who, sick of strife
And bloodshed, longed in quiet to be laid
In some green island of the western main.

XXXII.

1811.

THE power of Armies is a visible thing,
Formal, and circumscribed in time and space ;
But who the limits of that power shall trace
Which a brave People into light can bring

* See Laborde's character of the Spanish people ; from him the sentiment of these last two lines is taken.

† Sertorius.

Or hide, at will,—for freedom combating
 By just revenge inflamed? No foot may chase,
 No eye can follow, to a fatal place
 That power, that spirit, whether on the wing
 Like the strong wind, or sleeping like the wind
 Within its awful caves.—From year to year
 Springs this indigenous produce far and near;
 No craft this subtle element can bind,
 Rising like water from the soil, to find
 In every nook a lip that it may cheer.

XXXIII.

1811.

HERE pause: the poet claims at least this praise,
 That virtuous Liberty hath been the scope
 Of his pure song, which did not shrink from hope
 In the worst moment of these evil days;
 From hope, the paramount *duty* that Heaven lays,
 For its own honour, on man's suffering heart.
 Never may from our souls one truth depart—
 That an accursed thing it is to gaze
 On prosperous tyrants with a dazzled eye;
 Nor—touched with due abhorrence of *their* guilt
 For whose dire ends tears flow, and blood is spilt,
 And justice labours in extremity—
 Forget thy weakness, upon which is built,
 O wretched man, the throne of tyranny!

XXXIV.

THE FRENCH ARMY IN RUSSIA.

1812—13.

HUMANITY, delighting to behold
 A fond reflection of her own decay,
 Hath painted Winter like a traveller old,
 Propped on a staff, and, through the sullen day,
 In hooded mantle, limping o'er the plain,
 As though his weakness were disturbed by pain:
 Or, if a juster fancy should allow
 An undisputed symbol of command,
 The chosen sceptre is a withered bough,
 Firmly grasped within a palsied hand.
 These emblems suit the helpless and forlorn;
 But mighty Winter the device shall scorn.

For he it was—dread Winter! who beset,
 Lingering round van and rear his ghastly net,
 That host, when from the regions of the Pole
 They shrunk, insane ambition's barren goal—
 That host, as huge and strong as e'er defied
 Their God, and placed their trust in human pride!
 As fathers persecute rebellious sons,
 He smote the blossoms of their warrior youth;

He called on Frost's inexorable tooth
 Life to consume in Manhood's firmest hold;
 Nor spared the reverend blood that feebly runs;
 For why—unless for liberty enrolled
 And sacred home—ah! why should hoary Age be
 bold?

Fleet the Tartar's reinless steed,
 But fleet far the pinions of the Wind,
 Which from Siberian caves the Monarch freed,
 And sent him forth, with squadrons of his kind,
 And bade the Snow their ample backs bestride,
 And to the battle ride.

No pitying voice commands a halt,
 No courage can repel the dire assault;
 Distracted, spiritless, benumbed, and blind,
 Whole legions sink—and, in one instant, find
 Burial and death: look for them—and desery,
 When morn returns, beneath the clear blue sky,
 A soundless waste, a trackless vacancy!

XXXV.

ON THE SAME OCCASION.

YE Storms, resound the praises of your King!
 And ye mild Seasons—in a sunny clime,
 Midway on some high hill, while father Time
 Looks on delighted—meet in festal ring,
 And loud and long of Winter's triumph sing!
 Sing ye, with blossoms crowned, and fruits, and
 flowers,

Of Winter's breath surcharged with sleety showers,
 And the dire flapping of his hoary wing!
 Knit the blithe dance upon the soft green grass;
 With feet, hands, eyes, looks, lips, report your gain;
 Whisper it to the billows of the main,
 And to the ærial zephyrs as they pass,
 That old decrepit Winter—*He* hath slain
 That Host, which rendered all your bounties vain!

XXXVI.

By Moscow self-devoted to a blaze
 Of dreadful sacrifice; by Russian blood
 Lavished in fight with desperate hardihood;
 The unfeeling Elements no claim shall raise
 To rob our Human-nature of just praise
 For what she did and suffered. Pledges sure
 Of a deliverance absolute and pure
 She gave, if Faith might tread the beaten ways
 Of Providence. But now did the Most High
 Exalt his still small voice;—to quell that Host
 Gathered his power, a manifest ally;
 He, whose heaped waves confounded the proud boast
 Of Pharaoh, said to Famine, Snow, and Frost,
 "Finish the strife by deadliest victory!"

XXXVII.

THE GERMANS ON THE HEIGHTS OF HOCK HEIM

ABRUPTLY paused the strife ;—the field throughout
 Resting upon his arms each warrior stood,
 Checked in the very act and deed of blood,
 With breath suspended, like a listening scout.
 O Silence ! thou wert mother of a shout
 That through the texture of yon azure dome
 Cleaves its glad way, a cry of harvest home
 Uttered to Heaven in ecstasy devout ! [smoke,
 The barrier Rhine hath flashed, through battle—
 On men who gaze heart-smitten by the view,
 As if all Germany had felt the shock !
 —Fly, wretched Gauls ! ere they the charge renew
 Who have seen—themselves now casting off the
 yoke—
 The unconquerable Stream his course pursue.

XXXVIII.

NOVEMBER, 1813.

Now that all hearts are glad, all faces bright,
 Our aged Sovereign sits, to the ebb and flow
 Of states and kingdoms, to their joy or woe,
 Insensible. He sits deprived of sight,
 And lamentably wrapt in twofold night,
 Whom no weak hopes deceived ; whose mind ensued,
 Through perilous war, with regal fortitude,
 Peace that should claim respect from lawless Might.
 Dread King of Kings, vouchsafe a ray divine
 To his forlorn condition ! let thy grace
 Upon his inner soul in mercy shine ;
 Permit his heart to kindle, and to embrace
 (Though it were only for a moment's space)
 The triumphs of this hour ; for they are THINE !

XXXIX.

O D E.

1814.

— Carmina possumus
 Donare, et pretium dicere munerì.
 Non incisa notis marmora publicis,
 Per quæ spiritus et vita redivit bonis
 Post mortem ducibus
 — clarius indicant
 Laudes, quam — Pierides ; neque,
 Si chartæ sileant quod bene feceris,
 Mercedem tuleris. — Hor. Car. 8. Lib. 4.

I.

WHEN the soft hand of sleep had closed the latch
 On the tired household of corporeal sense,

And Fancy, keeping reluctant watch,
 Was free her choicest favours to dispense ;
 I saw, in wondrous perspective displayed,
 A landscape more august than happiest skill
 Of pencil ever clothed with light and shade ;
 An intermingled pomp of vale and hill,
 City, and naval stream, suburban grove,
 And stately forest where the wild deer rove ;
 Nor wanted lurking hamlet, dusky towns,
 And scattered rural farms of aspect bright ;
 And, here and there, between the pastoral downs,
 The azure sea upswelled upon the sight.
 Fair prospect, such as Britain only shows !
 But not a living creature could be seen
 Through its wide circuit, that, in deep repose,
 And, even to sadness, lonely and serene,
 Lay hushed ; till—through a portal in the sky
 Brighter than brightest loop-hole, in a storm,
 Opening before the sun's triumphant eye—
 Issued, to sudden view, a glorious Form !
 Earthward it glided with a swift descent :
 Saint George himself this Visitant must be ;
 And, ere a thought could ask on what intent
 He sought the regions of humanity,
 A thrilling voice was heard, that vivified
 City and field and flood ;—aloud it cried—

“ Though from my celestial home,
 “ Like a Champion, armed I come ;
 “ On my helm the dragon crest,
 “ And the red cross on my breast ;
 “ I, the Guardian of this Land,
 “ Speak not now of toilsome duty ;
 “ Well obeyed was that command—
 “ Whence bright days of festive beauty ;
 “ Haste, Virgins, haste !—the flowers which sum-
 mer gave
 “ Have perished in the field ;
 “ But the green thickets plenteously shall yield
 “ Fit garlands for the brave,
 “ That will be welcome, if by you entwined ;
 “ Haste, Virgins, haste ; and you, ye Matrons
 grave,
 “ Go forth with rival youthfulness of mind,
 “ And gather what ye find
 “ Of hardy laurel and wild holly boughs—
 “ To deck your stern Defenders' modest brows !
 “ Such simple gifts prepare,
 “ Though they have gained a worthier meed ;
 “ And in due time shall share
 “ Those palms and amaranthine wreaths
 “ Unto their martyred Countrymen decreed,
 “ In realms where everlasting freshness breathes !”

II.

And lo! with crimson banners proudly streaming,
 And upright weapons innocently gleaming,
 Along the surface of a spacious plain
 Advance in order the redoubted Bands,
 And there receive green chaplets from the hands
 Of a fair female train—
 Maids and Matrons, dight
 In robes of dazzling white;
 While from the crowd bursts forth a rapturous noise
 By the cloud-capt hills retorted;
 And a throng of rosy boys
 In loose fashion tell their joys;

And grey-haired sires, on staffs supported,
 Look round, and by their smiling seem to say,
 Thus strives a grateful Country to display
 The mighty debt which nothing can repay!

III.

Anon before my sight a palace rose
 Built of all precious substances,—so pure
 And exquisite, that sleep alone bestows
 Stability like splendour to endure:
 Entered, with streaming thousands, through the gate,
 I saw the banquet spread beneath a Dome of state,
 A lofty Dome, that dared to emulate
 The heaven of sable night
 With starry lustre; yet had power to throw
 A gemm'd effulgence, clear as solar light,
 Upon a princely company below,
 While the vault rang with choral harmony,
 Like some Nymph-haunted grot beneath the roar-
 ing sea.

No sooner ceased that peal, than on the verge
 Of exultation hung a dirge
 Breathed from a soft and lonely instrument,
 That kindled recollections
 Of agonised affections;
 And, though some tears the strain attended,
 The mournful passion ended
 In peace of spirit, and sublime content!

IV.

But garlands wither; festal shows depart,
 And dreams themselves; and sweetest sound—
 (Albeit of effect profound)
 It was—and it is gone!
 Oretorious England! bid the silent Art
 Reflect, in glowing hues that shall not fade,
 Those high achievements; even as she arrayed
 In second life the deed of Marathon
 Upon Athenian walls;

So may she labour for thy civic halls:

And be the guardian spaces
 Of consecrated places,
 As nobly graced by Sculpture's patient toil;
 And let imperishable Columns rise
 Fixed in the depths of this courageous soil;
 Expressive signals of a glorious strife,
 And competent to shed a spark divine
 Into the torpid breast of daily life;—
 Records on which, for pleasure of all eyes,
 The morning sun may shine
 With gratulation thoroughly benign!

V.

And ye, Pierian Sisters, sprung from Jove
 And sage Mnemosyne,—full long debarred
 From your first mansions, exiled all too long
 From many a hallowed stream and grove,
 Dear native regions where ye wont to rove,
 Chanting for patriot heroes the reward
 Of never-dying song!

Now (for, though Truth descending from above
 The Olympian summit hath destroyed for aye
 Your kindred Deities, Ye live and move,
 Spared for obeisance from perpetual love
 For privilege redeemed of godlike sway)
 Now, on the margin of some spotless fountain,
 Or top serene of unmolested mountain,
 Strike audibly the noblest of your lyres,
 And for a moment meet the soul's desires!
 That I, or some more favoured Bard, may hear
 What ye, celestial Maids! have often sung
 Of Britain's acts,—may catch it with rapt ear,
 And give the treasure to our British tongue!
 So shall the characters of that proud page
 Support their mighty theme from age to age;
 And, in the desert places of the earth,
 When they to future empires have given birth,
 So shall the people gather and believe
 The bold report, transferred to every clime;
 And the whole world, not envious but admiring,

And to the like aspiring,
 Own—that the progeny of this fair Isle
 Had power as lofty actions to achieve
 As were performed in man's heroic prime;
 Nor wanted, when their fortitude had held
 Its even tenor, and the foe was quelled,
 A corresponding virtue to beguile
 The hostile purpose of wide-wasting Time—
 That not in vain they laboured to secure,
 For their great deeds, perpetual memory,
 And fame as largely spread as land and sea,
 By Works of spirit high and passion pure!

XL.

FEELINGS OF A FRENCH ROYALIST,

ON THE DISINTERMENT OF THE REMAINS OF THE DUKE
D'ENGHIEN.

DEAR Reliques! from a pit of vilest mould
Uprisen—to lodge among ancestral kings;
And to inflict shame's salutary stings
On the remorseless hearts of men grown old
In a blind worship; men perversely bold
Even to this hour,—yet, some shall now forsake
Their monstrous Idol if the dead e'er spake,
To warn the living; if truth were ever told
By aught redeemed out of the hollow grave:
O murdered Prince! meek, loyal, pious, brave!
The power of retribution once was given:
But 'tis a rueful thought that willow bands
So often tie the thunder-wielding hands
Of Justice sent to earth from highest Heaven!

XLI.

OCCASIONED BY THE BATTLE OF WATERLOO.

(The last six lines intended for an Inscription.)

FEBRUARY, 1816.

INTREPID sons of Albion! not by you
Is life despised; ah no, the spacious earth
Ne'er saw a race who held, by right of birth,
So many objects to which love is due:
Ye slight not life—to God and Nature true;
But death, becoming death, is dearer far,
When duty bids you bleed in open war:
Hence hath your prowess quelled that impious crew.
Heroes!—for instant sacrifice prepared;
Yet filled with ardour and on triumph bent
'Mid direst shocks of mortal accident—
To you who fell, and you whom slaughter spared
To guard the fallen, and consummate the event,
Your Country rears this sacred Monument!

XLII.

SIEGE OF VIENNA RAISED BY JOHN SOBIESKI.

FEBRUARY, 1816.

O, FOR a kindling touch from that pure flame
Which ministered, erewhile, to a sacrifice
Of gratitude, beneath Italian skies,
In words like these: 'Up, Voice of song! proclaim
'Thy saintly rapture with celestial aim:
'For lo! the Imperial City stands released
'From bondage threatened by the embattled East,
'And Christendom respire; from guilt and shame
'Redeemed, from miserable fear set free
'By one day's feat, one mighty victory.

'—Chant the Deliverer's praise in every tongue!
'The cross shall spread, the crescent hath waxed
dim;
'He conquering, as in joyful Heaven is sung,
'HE CONQUERING THROUGH GOD, AND GOD BY HIM*.

XLIII.

OCCASIONED BY THE BATTLE OF WATERLOO.

FEBRUARY, 1816.

THE Bard—whose soul is meek as dawning day,
Yet trained to judgments righteously severe,
Fervid, yet conversant with holy fear,
As recognising one Almighty sway:
He—whose experienced eye can pierce the array
Of past events; to whom, in vision clear,
The aspiring heads of future things appear,
Like mountain-tops whose mists have rolled away—
Assailed from all encumbrance of our time †,
He only, if such breathe, in strains devout
Shall comprehend this victory sublime;
Shall worthily rehearse the hideous rout,
The triumph hail, which from their peaceful clime
Angels might welcome with a choral shout!

XLIV.

EMPERORS and Kings, how oft have temples rung
With impious thanksgiving, the Almighty's scorn!
How oft above their altars have been hung
Trophies that led the good and wise to mourn
Triumphant wrong, battle of battle born,
And sorrow that to fruitless sorrow clung!
Now, from Heaven-sanctioned victory, Peace is
sprung;
In this firm hour Salvation lifts her horn.
Glory to arms! But, conscious that the nerve
Of popular reason, long mistrusted, freed
Your thrones, ye Powers, from duty fear to swerve!
Be just, be grateful; nor, the oppressor's creed
Reviving, heavier chastisement deserve
Than ever forced unpitied hearts to bleed.

XLV.

O D E.

1815.

I.

IMAGINATION—ne'er before content,
But aye ascending, restless in her pride
From all that martial feats could yield
To her desires, or to her hopes present—

* See Filicaja's Ode.

† 'From all this world's encumbrance did himself assail.

—Spenser.

Soped to the Victory, on that Belgic field,
 Achieved, this closing deed magnificent,
 And with the embrace was satisfied.

—Fly, ministers of Fame,

With every help that ye from earth and heaven
 may claim!

Far through the world these tidings of delight!

—Hours, Days, and Months, have borne them in
 the sight

Mortals, hurrying like a sudden shower

That land-ward stretches from the sea,

The morning's splendours to devour;

But this swift travel scorns the company

Cirksome change, or threats from saddening
 power.

—*The shock is given—the Adversaries bleed—*

Lo, Justice triumphs! Earth is freed!

joyful annunciation!—it went forth—

Pierced the caverns of the sluggish North—

It found no barrier on the ridge

Andes—frozen gulphs became its bridge—

The vast Pacific gladdens with the freight—

On the Lakes of Asia 'tis bestowed—

The Arabian desert shapes a willing road

Across her burning breast,

But this refreshing incense from the West!—

—Where snakes and lions breed,

Where towns and cities thick as stars appear,

Where fruits are gathered, and where'er

The upturned soil receives the hopeful seed—

Wile the Sun rules, and cross the shades of night—

The unwearied arrow hath pursued its flight!

The eyes of good men thankfully give heed,

And in its sparkling progress read

Or virtue crowned with glory's deathless meed:

Tants exult to hear of kingdoms won,

All slaves are pleased to learn that mighty feats
 are done;

Even the proud Realm, from whose distracted
 borders

The messenger of good was launched in air,

Hence, humbled France, amid her wild disorders,

Fits, and hereafter shall the truth declare,

That she too lacks not reason to rejoice,

And utter England's name with sadly-plausive voice.

II.

Genuine glory, pure renown!

All well might it besem that mighty Town

To whose bosom earth's best treasures flow,

To whom all persecuted men retreat;

The new Temple lift her votive brow

On the shore of silver Thames—to greet

The peaceful guest advancing from afar.

Bright be the Fabric, as a star

Fresh risen, and beautiful within!—there meet

Dependence infinite, proportion just;

A Pile that Grace approves, and Time can trust

With his most sacred wealth, heroic dust.

III.

But if the valiant of this land

In reverential modesty demand,

That all observance, due to them, be paid

Where their serene progenitors are laid;

Kings, warriors, high-souled poets, saint-like sages,

England's illustrious sons of long, long ages;

Be it not unordained that solemn rites,

Within the circuit of those Gothic walls,

Shall be performed at pregnant intervals;

Commemoration holy that unites

The living generations with the dead;

By the deep soul-moving sense

Of religious eloquence,—

By visual pomp, and by the tie

Of sweet and threatening harmony;

Soft notes, awful as the omen

Of destructive tempests coming,

And escaping from that sadness

Into elevated gladness;

While the white-rob'd choir attendant,

Under mouldering banners pendant,

Provoke all potent symphonies to raise

Songs of victory and praise,

For them who bravely stood unhurt, or bled

With medicable wounds, or found their graves

Upon the battle field, or under ocean's waves;

Or were conducted home in single state,

And long procession—there to lie,

Where their sons' sons, and all posterity,

Unheard by them, their deeds shall celebrate!

IV.

Nor will the God of peace and love

Such martial service disapprove.

He guides the Pestilence—the cloud

Of locusts travels on his breath;

The region that in hope was ploughed

His drought consumes, his mildew taints with death;

He springs the hushed Volcano's mine,

He puts the Earthquake on her still design,

Darkens the sun, hath bade the forest sink,

And, drinking towns and cities, still can drink

Cities and towns—'tis Thou—the work is Thine!—

The fierce Tornado sleeps within thy courts—

He hears the word—he flies—

And navies perish in their ports;

For Thou art angry with thine enemies !
 For these, and mourning for our errors,
 And sins, that point their terrors,
 We bow our heads before Thee, and we laud
 And magnify thy name, Almighty God !
 But Man is thy most awful instrument,
 In working out a pure intent ;
 Thou cloth'st the wicked in their dazzling mail,
 And for thy righteous purpose they prevail ;
 Thine arm from peril guards the coasts
 Of them who in thy laws delight :
 Thy presence turns the scale of doubtful fight,
 Tremendous God of battles, Lord of Hosts !

v.

Forbear :—to Thee—
 Father and Judge of all, with fervent tongue
 But in a gentler strain
 Of contemplation, by no sense of wrong,
 (Too quick and keen) incited to disdain
 Of pity pleading from the heart in vain—
 To THEE—To THEE
 Just God of christianised Humanity
 Shall praises be poured forth, and thanks ascend,
 That thou hast brought our warfare to an end,
 And that we need no second victory !
 Blest, above measure blest,
 If on thy love our Land her hopes shall rest,
 And all the Nations labour to fulfil
 Thy law, and live henceforth in peace, in pure
 good will.

XLVI.

O D E.

THE MORNING OF THE DAY APPOINTED FOR A GENERAL
 THANKSGIVING. JANUARY 18, 1816.

i.

HAIL, orient Conqueror of gloomy Night !
 Thou that canst shed the bliss of gratitude
 On hearts howe'er insensible or rude ;
 Whether thy punctual visitations smite
 The haughty towers where monarchs dwell ;
 Or thou, impartial Sun, with presence bright
 Cheer'st the low threshold of the peasant's cell !
 Not unrejoiced I see thee climb the sl.y
 In naked splendour, clear from mist or haze,
 Or cloud approaching to divert the rays,
 Which even in deepest winter testify
 Thy power and majesty,
 Dazzling the vision that presumes to gaze.
 —Well does thine aspect usher in this Day ;

As aptly suits therewith that modest pace
 Submitted to the chains
 That bind thee to the path which God ordains
 That thou shalt trace,
 Till, with the heavens and earth, thou pass away !
 Nor less, the stillness of these frosty plains,
 Their utter stillness, and the silent grace
 Of yon ethereal summits white with snow,
 (Whose tranquil pomp and spotless purity
 Report of storms gone by
 To us who tread below)
 Do with the service of this Day accord.
 —Divinest Object which the uplifted eye
 Of mortal man is suffered to behold ; [pure
 Thou, who upon those snow-clad Heights ha
 Meek lustre, nor forget'st the humble Vale ;
 Thou who dost warm Earth's universal mould,
 And for thy bounty wert not unadored
 By pious men of old ;
 Once more, heart-cheering Sun, I bid thee hail !
 Bright be thy course to-day, let not this promise fail

ii.

'Mid the deep quiet of this morning hour,
 All nature seems to hear me while I speak,
 By feelings urged that do not vainly seek
 Apt language, ready as the tuneful notes
 That stream in blithe succession from the throats
 Of birds, in leafy bower,
 Warbling a farewell to a vernal shower.
 —There is a radiant though a short-lived flame,
 That burns for Poets in the dawning east ;
 And oft my soul hath kindled at the same,
 When the captivity of sleep had ceased ;
 But He who fixed immoveably the frame
 Of the round world, and built, by laws as strong,
 A solid refuge for distress—
 The towers of righteousness ;
 He knows that from a holier altar came
 The quickening spark of this day's sacrifice ;
 Knows that the source is nobler whence doth rise
 The current of this matin song ;
 That deeper far it lies
 Than aught dependent on the fickle skies.

iii.

Have we not conquered ?—by the vengeful swor
 Ah no, by dint of Magnanimity ;
 That curbed the baser passions, and left free
 A loyal band to follow their liege Lord
 Clear-sighted Honour, and his staid Compeers,
 Along a track of most unnatural years ;
 In execution of heroic deeds
 Whose memory, spotless as the crystal beads

morning dew upon the untrodden meads,
 All live enrolled above the starry spheres.
 Who in concert with an earthly string
 Of Britain's acts would sing,
 He with enraptured voice will tell
 One whose spirit no reverse could quell ;
 One that mid the failing never failed—
 Who paints how Britain struggled and prevailed
 All represent her labouring with an eye
 Of circumspect humanity ;
 All show her clothed with strength and skill,
 All martial duties to fulfil ;
 Firm as a rock in stationary fight ;
 Motion rapid as the lightning's gleam ;
 Force as a flood-gate bursting at mid night
 To rouse the wicked from their giddy dream—
 Ope, woe to all that face her in the field !
 Appalled she may not be, and cannot yield.

iv.

And thus is *miss'd* the sole true glory
 That can belong to human story !
 At which they only shall arrive
 Who through the abyss of weakness dive.
 The very humblest are too proud of heart ;
 And one brief day is rightly set apart
 For Him who lifteth up and layeth low ;
 For that Almighty God to whom we owe,
 Not that we have vanquished—but that we
 survive.

v.

How dreadful the dominion of the impure !
 Why should the Song be tardy to proclaim
 That less than power unbounded could not tame
 That soul of Evil—which, from hell let loose,
 Had filled the astonished world with such abuse
 Boundless patience only could endure ?
 Wide-wasted regions—cities wrapt in flame—
 Who sees, may lift a streaming eye
 To Heaven ;—who never saw, may heave a sigh ;
 For the foundation of our nature shakes,
 And with an infinite pain the spirit aches,
 When desolated countries, towns on fire,
 Are but the avowed attire
 Of warfare waged with desperate mind
 Against the life of virtue in mankind ;
 Assaulting without ruth
 The citadels of truth ;
 While the fair gardens of civility,
 By ignorance defaced,
 By violence laid waste,
 Perish without reprieve for flower or tree !

vi.

A crouching purpose—a distracted will—
 Opposed to hopes that batten'd upon scorn,
 And to desires whose ever-waxing horn
 Not all the light of earthly power could fill ;
 Opposed to dark, deep plots of patient skill,
 And to celerities of lawless force ;
 Which, spurning God, had flung away remorse—
 What could they gain but shadows of redress !
 —So bad proceeded propagating worse ;
 And discipline was passion's dire excess.
 Widens the fatal web, its lines extend,
 And deadlier poisons in the chalice blend.
 When will your trials teach you to be wise ?
 —O prostrate Lands, consult your agonies !

vii.

No more—the guilt is banish'd,
 And, with the guilt, the shame is fled ;
 And, with the guilt and shame, the Woe hath
 vanish'd,
 Shaking the dust and ashes from her head !
 —No more—these lingerings of distress
 Sully the limpid stream of thankfulness.
 What robe can Gratitude employ
 So seemly as the radiant vest of Joy ?
 What steps so suitable as those that move
 In prompt obedience to spontaneous measures
 Of glory, and felicity, and love,
 Surrendering the whole heart to sacred pleasures ?

viii.

O Britain ! dearer far than life is dear,
 If one there be
 Of all thy progeny
 Who can forget thy prowess, never more
 Be that ungrateful Son allowed to hear
 Thy green leaves rustle or thy torrents roar.
 As springs the lion from his den,
 As from a forest-brake
 Upstarts a glistening snake,
 The bold Arch-despot re-appeared ;—again
 Wide Europe heaves, impatient to be cast,
 With all her arm'd Powers,
 On that offensive soil, like waves upon a
 thousand shores.
 The trumpet blew a universal blast !
 But Thou art foremost in the field :—there stand :
 Receive the triumph destined to thy hand !
 All States have glorified themselves ;—their claims
 Are weighed by Providence, in balance even ;

And now, in preference to the mightiest names,
To Thee the exterminating sword is given.
Dread mark of approbation, justly gained !
Exalted office, worthily sustained !

IX.

Preserve, O Lord ! within our hearts
The memory of thy favour,
That else insensibly departs,
And loses its sweet savour !
Lodge it within us !—as the power of light
Lives inexhaustibly in precious gems,
Fixed on the front of Eastern diadems,
So shine our thankfulness for ever bright !
What offering, what transcendent monument
Shall our sincerity to Thee present ?
—Not work of hands ; but trophies that may
reach
To highest Heaven—the labour of the Soul ;
That builds, as thy unerring precepts teach,
Upon the internal conquests made by each,
Her hope of lasting glory for the whole.
Yet will not heaven disown nor earth gainsay
The outward service of this day ;
Whether the worshippers entreat
Forgiveness from God's mercy-seat ;
Or thanks and praises to His throne ascend
That He has brought our warfare to an end,
And that we need no second victory !—
Ha ! what a ghastly sight for man to see ;
And to the heavenly saints in peace who dwell,
For a brief moment, terrible ;
But, to thy sovereign penetration, fair,
Before whom all things are, that were,
All judgments that have been, or e'er shall be ;
Links in the chain of thy tranquillity !
Along the bosom of this favoured Nation,
Breathe Thou, this day, a vital undulation !
Let all who do this land inherit
Be conscious of thy moving spirit !
Oh, 'tis a goodly Ordinance,—the sight,
Though sprung from bleeding war, is one of pure
delight ;
Bless Thou the hour, or ere the hour arrive,
When a whole people shall kneel down in prayer,
And, at one moment, in one rapture, strive
With lip and heart to tell their gratitude
For thy protecting care,

Their solemn joy—praising the Eternal Lord
For tyranny subdued,
And for the sway of equity renewed,
For liberty confirmed, and peace restored !

X.

But hark—the summons !—down the placid lake
Floats the soft cadence of the church-tower bells ;
Bright shines the Sun, as if his beams would wake
The tender insects sleeping in their cells ;
Bright shines the Sun—and not a breeze to shake
The drops that tip the melting icicles.

O, enter now his temple gate !

Inviting words—perchance already flung
(As the crowd press devoutly down the aisle
Of some old Minster's venerable pile)
From voices into zealous passion stung,
While the tubed engine feels the inspiring blast,
And has begun—its clouds of sound to cast
Forth towards empyreal Heaven,
As if the fretted roof were riven.
Us, humbler ceremonies now await ;
But in the bosom, with devout respect
The banner of our joy we will erect,
And strength of love our souls shall elevate :
For to a few collected in his name,
Their heavenly Father will incline an ear
Gracious to service hallowed by its aim ;—
Awake ! the majesty of God revere !

Go—and with foreheads meekly bowed
Present your prayers—go—and rejoice aloud—

The Holy One will hear !

And what, 'mid silence deep, with faith sincere,
Ye, in your low and undisturbed estate,
Shall simply feel and purely meditate—
Of warnings—from the unprecedented might,
Which, in our time, the impious have disclosed ;
And of more arduous duties thence imposed
Upon the future advocates of right ;

Of mysteries revealed,
And judgments unrepealed,
Of earthly revolution,
And final retribution,—

To his omniscience will appear
An offering not unworthy to find place,
On this high DAY of THANKS, before the Throne
of Grace !

MEMORIALS OF A TOUR ON THE CONTINENT.

1820.

DEDICATION.

(SENT WITH THESE POEMS, IN MS., TO ——).

DEAR Fellow-travellers! think not that the Muse,
 To You presenting these memorial Lays,
 Can hope the general eye thereon would gaze,
 As on a mirror that gives back the hues
 Of living Nature; no—though free to choose
 The greenest bowers, the most inviting ways,
 The fairest landscapes and the brightest days—

RYDAL MOUNT, Nov. 1821.

Her skill she tried with less ambitious views.
 For You she wrought: Ye only can supply
 The life, the truth, the beauty: she confides
 In that enjoyment which with You abides,
 Trusts to your love and vivid memory;
 Thus far contented, that for You her verse
 Shall lack not power the 'meeting soul to pierce!'

W. WORDSWORTH.

I.

FISH-WOMEN.—ON LANDING AT CALAIS.

As said, fantastic ocean doth enfold
 The likeness of whate'er on land is seen;
 It, if the Nereid Sisters and their Queen,
 Love whose heads the tide so long hath rolled,
 The Dames resemble whom we here behold,
 How fearful were it down through opening waves
 To sink, and meet them in their fretted caves,
 Thithered, grotesque, immeasurably old,
 And shrill and fierce in accent!—Fear it not:
 For they Earth's fairest daughters do excel;
 Their undecaying beauty is their lot;
 Their voices into liquid music swell,
 Thrilling each pearly cleft and sparry grot,
 The undisturbed abodes where Sea-nymphs dwell!

II.

BRUGÈS.

BRUGÈS I saw attired with golden light
 (reamed from the west) as with a robe of power:
 The splendour fled; and now the sunless hour,
 That, slowly making way for peaceful night,
 Drest suits with fallen grandeur, to my sight
 Shows the beauty, the magnificence,
 And sober graces, left her for defence
 Against the injuries of time, the spite
 Of fortune, and the desolating storms
 Of future war. Advance not—spare to hide,
 Gentle Power of darkness! these mild hues;
 Secure not yet these silent avenues
 Of stateliest architecture, where the Forms
 Nun-like females, with soft motion, glide!

III.

BRUGÈS.

THE Spirit of Antiquity—enshrined
 In sumptuous buildings, vocal in sweet song,
 In picture, speaking with heroic tongue,
 And with devout solemnities entwined—
 Mounts to the seat of grace within the mind:
 Hence Forms that glide with swan-like ease along,
 Hence motions, even amid the vulgar throng,
 To an harmonious decency confined:
 As if the streets were consecrated ground,
 The city one vast temple, dedicate
 To mutual respect in thought and deed;
 To leisure, to forbearances sedate;
 To social cares from jarring passions freed;
 A deeper peace than that in deserts found!

IV.

INCIDENT AT BRUGÈS.

IN Brugès town is many a street
 Whence busy life hath fled;
 Where, without hurry, noiseless feet,
 The grass-grown pavement tread.
 There heard we, halting in the shade
 Flung from a Convent-tower,
 A harp that tuneful prelude made
 To a voice of thrilling power.

The measure, simple truth to tell,
 Was fit for some gay throng ;
 Though from the same grim turret fell
 The shadow and the song.
 When silent were both voice and chords,
 The strain seemed doubly dear,
 Yet sad as sweet,—for *English* words
 Had fallen upon the ear.

It was a breezy hour of eve ;
 And pinnacle and spire
 Quivered and seemed almost to heave,
 Clothed with innocuous fire ;
 But, where we stood, the setting sun
 Showed little of his state ;
 And, if the glory reached the Nun,
 'Twas through an iron grate.

Not always is the heart unwise,
 Nor pity idly born,
 If even a passing Stranger sighs
 For them who do not mourn.
 Sad is thy doom, self-solaced dove,
 Captive, whoe'er thou be !
 Oh ! what is beauty, what is love,
 And opening life to thee ?

Such feeling pressed upon my soul,
 A feeling sanctified
 By one soft trickling tear that stole
 From the Maiden at my side ;
 Less tribute could she pay than this,
 Borne gaily o'er the sea,
 Fresh from the beauty and the bliss
 Of English liberty ?

V.

AFTER VISITING THE FIELD OF WATERLOO.

A WINGED Goddess—clothed in vesture wrought
 Of rainbow colours ; One whose port was bold,
 Whose overburthened hand could scarcely hold
 The glittering crowns and garlands which it
 brought—

Hovered in air above the far-famed Spot.
 She vanished ; leaving prospect blank and cold
 Of wind-swept corn that wide around us rolled
 In dreary billows, wood, and meagre cot,
 And monuments that soon must disappear :
 Yet a dread local recompence we found ;
 While glory seemed betrayed, while patriot-zeal
 Sank in our hearts, we felt as men *should* feel
 With such vast hoards of hidden carnage near,
 And horror breathing from the silent ground !

VI.

BETWEEN NAMUR AND LIEGE.

WHAT lovelier home could gentle Fancy choose !
 Is this the stream, whose cities, heights, and plains,
 War's favourite playground, are with crimson stains
 Familiar, as the Morn with pearly dew ?
 The Morn, that now, along the silver MEUSE,
 Spreading her peaceful ensigns, calls the swains
 To tend their silent boats and ringing wains,
 Or strip the bough whose mellow fruit bestrewn
 The ripening corn beneath it. As mine eyes
 Turn from the fortified and threatening hill,
 How sweet the prospect of yon watery glade,
 With its grey rocks clustering in pensive shade—
 That, shaped like old monastic turrets, rise
 From the smooth meadow-ground, serene and still !

VII.

AIX-LA-CHAPELLE.

Was it to disenchant, and to undo,
 That we approached the Seat of Charlemaine !
 To sweep from many an old romantic strain
 That faith which no devotion may renew !
 Why does this puny Church present to view
 Her feeble columns ? and that scanty chair !
 This sword that one of our weak times might wear !
 Objects of false pretence, or meanly true !
 If from a traveller's fortune I might claim
 A palpable memorial of that day,
 Then would I seek the Pyrenean Breach
 That ROLAND clove with huge two-handed sway,
 And to the enormous labour left his name,
 Where unremitting frosts the rocky crescent bleach

VIII.

IN THE CATHEDRAL AT COLOGNE.

O FOR the help of Angels to complete
 This Temple—Angels governed by a plan
 Thus far pursued (how gloriously !) by Man,
 Studious that *He* might not disdain the seat
 Who dwells in heaven ! But that aspiring heat
 Hath failed ; and now, ye Powers ! whose gorgeous
 wings
 And splendid aspect yon emblazonings
 But faintly picture, 'twere an office meet
 For you, on these unfinished shafts to try
 The midnight virtues of your harmony :—
 This vast design might tempt you to repeat
 Strains that call forth upon empyreal ground
 Immortal Fabrics, rising to the sound
 Of penetrating harps and voices sweet !

IX.

IN A CARRIAGE, UPON THE BANKS OF THE RHINE.

AMID this dance of objects sadness steals
 O'er the defrauded heart—while sweeping by,
 As in a fit of Thespian jollity,
 Beneath her vine-leaf crown the green Earth reels :
 Backward, in rapid evanescence, wheels
 The venerable pageantry of Time,
 Each beetling rampart, and each tower sublime,
 And what the Dell unwillingly reveals
 Of lurking cloistral arch, through trees espied
 Near the bright River's edge. Yet why repine?
 To muse, to creep, to halt at will, to gaze—
 Such sweet way-faring—of life's spring the pride,
 Her summer's faithful joy—that still is mine,
 And in fit measure cheers autumnal days.

X.

HYMN,

FOR THE BOATMEN, AS THEY APPROACH THE RAPIDS
 UNDER THE CASTLE OF HEIDELBERG.

JESU! bless our slender Boat,
 By the current swept along;
 Loud its threatenings—let them not
 Drown the music of a song
 Breathed thy mercy to implore,
 Where these troubled waters roar!

Saviour, for our warning, seen
 Bleeding on that precious Rood;
 If, while through the meadows green
 Gently wound the peaceful flood,
 We forgot Thee, do not Thou
 Disregard thy Suppliants now!

Hither, like yon ancient Tower
 Watching o'er the River's bed,
 Flung the shadow of thy power,
 Else we sleep among the dead;
 Thou who trod'st the billowy sea,
 Shield us in our jeopardy!

Guide our Bark among the waves;
 Through the rocks our passage smooth;
 Where the whirlpool frets and raves
 Let thy love its anger soothe:
 All our hope is placed in Thee;
Miserere Domine *!

* See Note.

XI.

THE SOURCE OF THE DANUBE.

Not, like his great Compeers, indignantly
 Doth DANUBE spring to life *! The wandering
 Stream
 (Who loves the Cross, yet to the Crescent's gleam
 Unfolds a willing breast) with infant glee
 Slips from his prison walls: and Fancy, free
 To follow in his track of silver light,
 Mounts on rapt wing, and with a moment's flight
 Hath reached the encincture of that gloomy sea
 Whose waves the Orphean lyre forbid to meet
 In conflict; whose rough winds forgot their jars
 To waft the heroic progeny of Greece;
 When the first Ship sailed for the Golden Fleece—
 ARGO—exalted for that daring feat
 To fix in heaven her shape distinct with stars.

XII.

ON APPROACHING THE STAUB-BACH, LAUTERBRUNNEN.

UTTERED by whom, or how inspired—designed
 For what strange service, does this concert reach
 Our ears, and near the dwellings of mankind!
 Mid fields familiarized to human speech?—
 No Mermaids warble—to allay the wind
 Driving some vessel toward a dangerous beach—
 More thrilling melodies; Witch answering Witch,
 To chant a love-spell, never intertwined
 Notes shrill and wild with art more musical:
 Alas! that from the lips of abject Want
 Or Idleness in tatters mendicant
 The strain should flow—free Fancy to enthrall,
 And with regret and useless pity haunt
 This bold, this bright, this sky-born, WATERFALL†!

XIII.

THE FALL OF THE AAR—HANDEG.

FROM the fierce aspect of this River, throwing
 His giant body o'er the steep rock's brink,
 Back in astonishment and fear we shrink:
 But, gradually a calmer look bestowing,
 Flowers we espy beside the torrent growing;
 Flowers that peep forth from many a cleft and
 chink,
 And, from the whirlwind of his anger, drink
 Hues ever fresh, in rocky fortress blowing:
 They suck—from breath that, threatening to
 destroy,

* See Note.

† See Note.

Is more benignant than the dewy eve—
Beauty, and life, and motions as of joy :
Nor doubt but HE to whom yon Pine-trees nod
Their heads in sign of worship, Nature's God,
These humbler adorations will receive.

XIV.

MEMORIAL,

NEAR THE OUTLET OF THE LAKE OF THUN.

'DEM
ANDENKEN
MEINES FREUNDES
ALOYS REDING
MDCCCXVIII.'

Aloys Reding, it will be remembered, was Captain-General of the Swiss forces, which, with a courage and perseverance worthy of the cause, opposed the flagitious and too successful attempt of Buonaparte to subjugate their country.

AROUND a wild and woody hill
A gravelled pathway treading,
We reached a votive Stone that bears
The name of Aloys Reding.

Well judged the Friend who placed it there
For silence and protection ;
And haply with a finer care
Of dutiful affection.

The Sun regards it from the West ;
And, while in summer glory
He sets, his sinking yields a type
Of that pathetic story :

And oft he tempts the patriot Swiss
Amid the grove to linger ;
Till all is dim, save this bright Stone
Touched by his golden finger.

XV.

COMPOSED IN ONE OF THE CATHOLIC CANTONS.

DOOMED as we are our native dust
To wet with many a bitter shower,
It ill befits us to disdain
The altar, to deride the fane,
Where simple Sufferers bend, in trust
To win a happier hour.

I love, where spreads the village lawn,
Upon some knee-worn cell to gaze :
Hail to the firm unmoving cross,
Aloft, where pines their branches toss !
And to the chapel far withdrawn,
That lurks by lonely ways !

Where'er we roam—along the brink
Of Rhine—or by the sweeping Po,
Through Alpine vale, or champain wide,
Whate'er we look on, at our side
Be Charity !—to bid us think,
And feel, if we would know.

XVI.

AFTER-THOUGHT.

OH Life ! without thy chequered scene
Of right and wrong, of weal and woe,
Success and failure, could a ground
For magnanimity be found ;
For faith, 'mid ruined hopes, serene ?
Or whence could virtue flow ?

Pain entered through a ghastly breach—
Nor while sin lasts must effort cease ;
Heaven upon earth's an empty boast ;
But, for the bowers of Eden lost,
Mercy has placed within our reach
A portion of God's peace.

XVII.

SCENE ON THE LAKE OF BRIENTZ.

'WHAT know we of the Blest above
But that they sing and that they love ?
Yet, if they ever did inspire
A mortal hymn, or shaped the choir,
Now, where those harvest Damsels float
Homeward in their rugged Boat,
(While all the ruffling winds are fled—
Each slumbering on some mountain's head)
Now, surely, hath that gracious aid
Been felt, that influence is displayed.
Pupils of Heaven, in order stand
The rustic Maidens, every hand
Upon a Sister's shoulder laid,—
To chant, as glides the boat along,
A simple, but a touching, song ;
To chant, as Angels do above,
The melodies of Peace in love !

XVIII.

ENGELBERG, THE HILL OF ANGELS*.

For gentlest uses, oft-times Nature takes
 The work of Fancy from her willing hands ;
 And such a beautiful creation makes
 As renders needless spells and magic wands,
 And for the boldest tale belief commands.
 When first mine eyes beheld that famous Hill
 The sacred ENGELBERG, celestial Bands,
 With intermingling motions soft and still,
 Hung round its top, on wings that changed their
 hues at will.

Clouds do not name those Visitants ; they were
 The very Angels whose authentic lays,
 Sung from that heavenly ground in middle air,
 Made known the spot where piety should raise
 A holy Structure to the Almighty's praise.
 Resplendent Apparition ! if in vain
 My ears did listen, 'twas enough to gaze ;
 And watch the slow departure of the train,
 Whose skirts the glowing Mountain thirsted to
 detain.

XIX.

OUR LADY OF THE SNOW.

MEEK Virgin Mother, more benign
 Than fairest Star, upon the height
 Of thy own mountain †, set to keep
 Lone vigils through the hours of sleep,
 What eye can look upon thy shrine
 Untroubled at the sight ?

These crowded offerings as they hang
 In sign of misery relieved,
 Even these, without intent of theirs,
 Report of comfortless despairs,
 Of many a deep and cureless pang
 And confidence deceived.

To Thee, in this ærial cleft,
 As to a common centre, tend
 All sufferers that no more rely
 On mortal succour—all who sigh
 And pine, of human hope bereft,
 Nor wish for earthly friend.

* See Note.

† Mount Righi.

And hence, O Virgin Mother mild !
 Though plenteous flowers around thee blow,
 Not only from the dreary strife
 Of Winter, but the storms of life,
 Thee have thy Votaries aptly styled,
 OUR LADY OF THE SNOW.

Even for the Man who stops not here,
 But down the irriguous valley hies,
 Thy very name, O Lady ! flings,
 O'er blooming fields and gushing springs
 A tender sense of shadowy fear,
 And chastening sympathies !

Nor falls that intermingling shade
 To summer-gladsomeness unkind :
 It chastens only to requite
 With gleams of fresher, purer, light ;
 While, o'er the flower-enamelled glade,
 More sweetly breathes the wind.

But on !—a tempting downward way,
 A verdant path before us lies ;
 Clear shines the glorious sun above ;
 Then give free course to joy and love,
 Deeming the evil of the day
 Sufficient for the wise.

XX.

EFFUSION,

IN PRESENCE OF THE PAINTED TOWER OF TELL,
AT ALTORF.

This Tower stands upon the spot where grew the Linden
 Tree against which his Son is said to have been placed,
 when the Father's archery was put to proof under cir-
 cumstances so famous in Swiss Story.

WHAT though the Italian pencil wrought not here,
 Nor such fine skill as did the meed bestow
 On Marathonian valour, yet the tear
 Springs forth in presence of this gaudy show,
 While narrow cares their limits overflow.
 Thrice happy, burghers, peasants, warriors old,
 Infants in arms, and ye, that as ye go
 Home-ward or school-ward, ape what ye behold ;
 Heroes before your time, in frolic fancy bold !

And when that calm Spectatress from on high
 Looks down—the bright and solitary Moon,
 Who never gazes but to beautify ;
 And snow-fed torrents, which the blaze of noon
 Roused into fury, murmur a soft tune
 That fosters peace, and gentleness recalls ;

Then might the passing Monk receive a boon
Of saintly pleasure from these pictured walls,
While, on the warlike groups, the mellowing lustre
falls.

How blest the souls who when their trials come
Yield not to terror or despondency,
But face like that sweet Boy their mortal doom,
Whose head the ruddy apple tops, while he
Expectant stands beneath the linden tree :
He quakes not like the timid forest game,
But smiles—the hesitating shaft to free ;
Assured that Heaven its justice will proclaim,
And to his Father give its own unerring aim.

XXI.

THE TOWN OF SCHWYTZ.

By antique Fancy trimmed—though lowly, bred
To dignity—in thee, O SCHWYTZ ! are seen
The genuine features of the golden mean ;
Equality by Prudence governèd,
Or jealous Nature ruling in her stead ;
And, therefore, art thou blest with peace, serene
As that of the sweet fields and meadows green
In unambitious compass round thee spread.
Majestic BERNE, high on her guardian steep,
Holding a central station of command,
Might well be styled this noble body's HEAD ;
Thou, lodged 'mid mountainous entrenchments deep,
Its HEART ; and ever may the heroic Land
Thy name, O SCHWYTZ, in happy freedom keep * !

XXII.

ON HEARING THE "RANZ DES VACHES" ON THE TOP
OF THE PASS OF ST. GOTHARD.

I LISTEN—but no faculty of mine
Avails those modulations to detect,
Which, heard in foreign lands, the Swiss affect
With tenderest passion ; leaving him to pine
(So fame reports) and die,—his sweet-breath'd
kine
Remembering, and green Alpine pastures decked
With vernal flowers. Yet may we not reject
The tale as fabulous.—Here while I recline,
Mindful how others by this simple Strain

* Nearly 500 years (says Ebel, speaking of the French Invasion,) had elapsed, when, for the first time, foreign soldiers were seen upon the frontiers of this small Canton, to impose upon it the laws of their governors.

Are moved, for me—upon this Mountain named
Of God himself from dread pre-eminence—
Aspiring thoughts, by memory reclaimed,
Yield to the Music's touching influence ;
And joys of distant home my heart enchain.

XXIII.

FORT FUENTES.

The Ruins of Fort Fuentes form the crest of a rock-eminence that rises from the plain at the head of the lake of Como, commanding views up the Valteline, and toward the town of Chiavenna. The prospect in the latter direction is characterised by melancholy sublimity. We rejoice at being favoured with a distinct view of those Alpine heights ; not, as we had expected from the breaking up of the storm, steeped in celestial glory, yet in communion with clouds floating or stationary—scatterings from heaven. The Ruin is interesting both in mass and in detail. An Inscription, upon elaborately-sculptured marble lying on the ground, records that the Fort had been erected by Count Fuentes in the year 1600, during the reign of Philip the Third ; and the Chapel, about twenty years after, by one of his Descendants. Marble pillars of gateway are yet standing, and a considerable part of the Chapel walls. A smooth green turf has taken place of the pavement, and we could see no trace of altar or image ; but everywhere something to remind one of former splendour, and of devastation and tumult. In our ascent we had passed abundance of wild vines intermingled with bushes : near the ruins were some ill tended, but growing willingly and rock, turf, and fragments of the pile, are alike covered or adorned with a variety of flowers, among which the rose-coloured pink was growing in great beauty. While descending, we discovered on the ground, apart from the path, and at a considerable distance from the ruined Chapel, a statue of a Child in pure white marble, uninjured by the explosion that had driven it so far down the hill. "How little," we exclaimed, "are these things valued here ! Could we but transport this pretty Image to our own garden !"—"Yet it seemed it would have been a pity any one should remove it from its couch in the wilderness, which may be its own for hundreds of years.—*Extract from Journal.*

DREAD hour ! when, upheaved by war's sulphurous blast,

This sweet-visaged Cherub of Parian stone
So far from the holy enclosure was cast,
To couch in this thicket of brambles alone,

To rest where the lizard may bask in the palm
Of his half-open hand pure from blemish or speck
And the green, gilded snake, without troubling the
calm

Of the beautiful countenance, twine round his neck

Where haply (kind service to Piety due!)
 When winter the grove of its mantle bereaves,
 Some bird (like our own honoured redbreast) may
 strew
 The desolate Slumberer with moss and with leaves.

VENTES once harboured the good and the brave,
 Nor to her was the dance of soft pleasure unknown;
 Her banners for festal enjoyment did wave
 While the thrill of her fifes thro' the mountains
 was blown:

Now gads the wild vine o'er the pathless ascent;—
 O silence of Nature, how deep is thy sway,
 When the whirlwind of human destruction is spent,
 Our tumults appeased, and our strifes passed away!

XXIV.

THE CHURCH OF SAN SALVADOR, SEEN FROM THE
LAKE OF LUGANO.

This Church was almost destroyed by lightning a few years ago, but the altar and the image of the Patron Saint were untouched. The Mount, upon the summit of which the Church is built, stands amid the intricacies of the Lake of Lugano; and is, from a hundred points of view, its principal ornament, rising to the height of 2000 feet; and, on one side, nearly perpendicular. The ascent is toilsome; but the traveller who performs it will be amply rewarded. Splendid fertility, rich woods and dazzling waters, seclusion and confinement of view contrasted with sea-like extent of plain fading into the sky; and this again, in an opposite quarter, with an horizon of the loftiest and boldest Alps—unite in composing a prospect more diversified by magnificence, beauty, and sublimity, than perhaps any other point in Europe, of so inconsiderable an elevation, commands.

Thou sacred Pile! whose turrets rise
 From yon steep mountain's loftiest stage,
 Guarded by lone San Salvador;
 Sink (if thou must) as heretofore,
 To sulphurous bolts a sacrifice,
 But ne'er to human rage!

On Horeb's top, on Sinai, deigned
 To rest the universal Lord:
 Why leap the fountains from their cells
 Where everlasting Bounty dwells?—
 That, while the Creature is sustained,
 His God may be adored.

Cliffs, fountains, rivers, seasons, times—
 Let all remind the soul of heaven;
 Our slack devotion needs them all;
 And Faith—so oft of sense the thrall,

While she, by aid of Nature, climbs—
 May hope to be forgiven.

Glory, and patriotic Love,
 And all the Poms of this frail 'spot
 Which men call Earth,' have yearned to seek,
 Associate with the simply meek,
 Religion in the sainted grove,
 And in the hallowed grot.

Thither, in time of adverse shocks,
 Of fainting hopes and backward wills,
 Did mighty Tell repair of old—
 A Hero cast in Nature's mould,
 Deliverer of the stedfast rocks
 And of the ancient hills!

He, too, of battle-martyrs chief!
 Who, to recal his daunted peers,
 For victory shaped an open space,
 By gathering with a wide embrace,
 Into his single breast, a sheaf
 Of fatal Austrian spears*.

XXV.

THE ITALIAN ITINERANT, AND THE SWISS GOATHERD.

PART I.

I.

Now that the farewell tear is dried,
 Heaven prosper thee, be hope thy guide!
 Hope be thy guide, adventurous Boy;
 The wages of thy travel, joy!
 Whether for London bound—to trill
 Thy mountain notes with simple skill;
 Or on thy head to poise a show
 Of Images in seemly row;
 The graceful form of milk-white Steed,
 Or Bird that soared with Ganymede;
 Or through our hamlets thou wilt bear
 The sightless Milton, with his hair
 Around his placid temples curled;
 And Shakspeare at his side—a freight,
 If clay could think and mind were weight,
 For him who bore the world!
 Hope be thy guide, adventurous Boy;
 The wages of thy travel, joy!

* Arnold Winkelried, at the battle of Sempach, broke an Austrian phalanx in this manner. The event is one of the most famous in the annals of Swiss heroism; and pictures and prints of it are frequent throughout the country.

II.

But thou, perhaps, (alert as free
 Though serving sage philosophy)
 Wilt ramble over hill and dale,
 A Vender of the well-wrought Scale,
 Whose sentient tube instructs to time
 A purpose to a fickle clime :
 Whether thou choose this useful part,
 Or minister to finer art,
 Though robbed of many a cherished dream,
 And crossed by many a shattered scheme,
 What stirring wonders wilt thou see
 In the proud Isle of liberty !
 Yet will the Wanderer sometimes pine
 With thoughts which no delights can chase,
 Recal a Sister's last embrace,
 His Mother's neck entwine ;
 Nor shall forget the Maiden coy
 That *would* have loved the bright-haired Boy !

III.

My Song, encouraged by the grace
 That beams from his ingenuous face,
 For this Adventurer scruples not
 To prophesy a golden lot ;
 Due recompence, and safe return
 To Como's steep—his happy bourne !
 Where he, aloft in garden glade,
 Shall tend, with his own dark-eyed Maid,
 The towering maize, and prop the twig
 That ill supports the luscious fig ;
 Or feed his eye in paths sun-proof
 With purple of the trellis-roof,
 That through the jealous leaves escapes
 From Cadenabbia's pendent grapes.
 —Oh might he tempt that Goatherd-child
 To share his wanderings ! him whose look
 Even yet my heart can scarcely brook,
 So touchingly he smiled—
 As with a rapture caught from heaven—
 For unasked alms in pity given.

PART II.

I.

With nodding plumes, and lightly drest
 Like foresters in leaf-green vest,
 The Helvetian Mountaineers, on ground
 For Tell's dread archery renowned,
 Before the target stood—to claim
 The guerdon of the steadiest aim.
 Loud was the rifle-gun's report—
 A startling thunder quick and short !

But, flying through the heights around,
 Echo prolonged a tell-tale sound
 Of hearts and hands alike 'prepared
 The treasures they enjoy to guard !'
 And, if there be a favoured hour
 When Heroes are allowed to quit
 The tomb, and on the clouds to sit
 With tutelary power,
 On their Descendants shedding grace—
 This was the hour, and that the place.

II.

But Truth inspired the Bards of old
 When of an iron age they told,
 Which to unequal laws gave birth,
 And drove Astræa from the earth.
 —A gentle Boy (perchance with blood
 As noble as the best endued,
 But seemingly a Thing despised ;
 Even by the sun and air unpriized ;
 For not a tinge or flowery streak
 Appeared upon his tender cheek)
 Heart-deaf to those rebounding notes,
 Apart, beside his silent goats,
 Sate watching in a forest shed,
 Pale, ragged, with bare feet and head ;
 Mute as the snow upon the hill,
 And, as the saint he prays to, still.
 Ah, what avails heroic deed ?
 What liberty ? if no defence
 Be won for feeble Innocence.
 Father of all ! though wilful Manhood read
 His punishment in soul-distress,
 Grant to the morn of life its natural blessedness !

XXVI.

THE LAST SUPPER, BY LEONARDO DA VINCI, IN THE
 REFECTORY OF THE CONVENT OF MARIA DELLA
 GRAZIA—MILAN *.

Tho' searching damps and many an envious flaw
 Have marred this Work ; the calm ethereal grace
 The love deep-seated in the Saviour's face,
 The mercy, goodness, have not failed to awe
 The Elements ; as they do melt and thaw
 The heart of the Beholder—and erase
 (At least for one rapt moment) every trace
 Of disobedience to the primal law.
 The annunciation of the dreadful truth
 Made to the Twelve, survives: lip, forehead, cheek

* See Note.

and hand reposing on the board in ruth
 Of what it utters, while the unguilty seek
 Unquestionable meanings—still bespeak
 A labour worthy of eternal youth!

XXVII.

THE ECLIPSE OF THE SUN, 1820.

High on her speculative tower
 Stood Science waiting for the hour
 When Sol was destined to endure
That darkening of his radiant face
 Which Superstition strove to chase,
 Erewhile, with rites impure.

Afloat beneath Italian skies,
 Through regions fair as Paradise
 We gaily passed,—till Nature wrought
 A silent and unlooked-for change,
 That checked the desultory range
 Of joy and sprightly thought.

Where'er was dipped the toiling oar,
 The waves danced round us as before,
 As lightly, though of altered hue,
 Mid recent coolness, such as falls
 At noontide from umbrageous walls
 That screen the morning dew.

No vapour stretched its wings; no cloud
 Cast far or near a murky shroud;
 The sky an azure field displayed;
 'Twas sunlight sheathed and gently charmed,
 Of all its sparkling rays disarmed,
 And as in slumber laid,—

Or something night and day between,
 Like moonshine—but the hue was green;
 Still moonshine, without shadow, spread
 On jutting rock, and curvèd shore,
 Where gazed the peasant from his door
 And on the mountain's head.

It tinged the Julian steeps—it lay,
 Lugano! on thy ample bay;
 The solemnizing veil was drawn
 O'er villas, terraces, and towers;
 To Albogasio's olive bowers,
 Porlezza's verdant lawn.

But Fancy with the speed of fire
 Hath past to Milan's loftiest spire,
 And there alights 'mid that ærial host
 Of Figures human and divine*,
 White as the snows of Apennine
 Indurated by frost.

Awe-stricken she beholds the array
 That guards the Temple night and day;
 Angels she sees—that might from heaven have
 flown,

And Virgin-saints, who not in vain
 Have striven by purity to gain
 The beatific crown—

Sees long-drawn files, concentric rings
 Each narrowing above each;—the wings,
 The uplifted palms, the silent marble lips
 The starry zone of sovereign height†—
 All steeped in this portentous light!
 All suffering dim eclipse!

Thus after Man had fallen (if aught
 These perishable spheres have wrought
 May with that issue be compared)
 Throngs of celestial visages,
 Darkening like water in the breeze,
 A holy sadness shared.

Lo! while I speak, the labouring Sun
 His glad deliverance has begun:
 The cypress waves her sombre plume
 More cheerily; and town and tower,
 The vineyard and the olive-bower,
 Their lustre re-assume!

O Ye, who guard and grace my home
 While in far-distant lands we roam,
 What countenance hath this Day put on for you?
 While we looked round with favoured eyes,
 Did sullen mists hide lake and skies
 And mountains from your view?

Or was it given you to behold
 Like vision, pensive though not cold,
 From the smooth breast of gay Winandermere?
 Saw ye the soft yet awful veil
 Spread over Grasmere's lovely dale,
 Helvellyn's brow severe?

* See Note.

† Above the highest circle of figures is a zone of metallic stars.

I ask in vain—and know far less
 If sickness, sorrow, or distress
 Have spared my Dwelling to this hour;
 Sad blindness! but ordained to prove
 Our faith in Heaven's unailing love
 And all-controlling power.

XXVIII.

THE THREE COTTAGE GIRLS.

I.

How blest the Maid whose heart—yet free
 From Love's uneasy sovereignty—
 Beats with a fancy running high,
 Her simple cares to magnify;
 Whom Labour, never urged to toil,
 Hath cherished on a healthful soil;
 Who knows not pomp, who heeds not pelf;
 Whose heaviest sin it is to look
 Askance upon her pretty Self
 Reflected in some crystal brook;
 Whom grief hath spared—who sheds no tear
 But in sweet pity; and can hear
 Another's praise from envy clear.

II.

Such (but O lavish Nature! why
 That dark unfathomable eye,
 Where lurks a Spirit that replies
 To stillest mood of softest skies,
 Yet hints at peace to be o'erthrown,
 Another's first, and then her own?)
 Such, haply, yon ITALIAN Maid,
 Our Lady's laggard Votaress,
 Halting beneath the chestnut shade
 To accomplish there her loveliness:
 Nice aid maternal fingers lend;
 A Sister serves with slacker hand;
 Then, glittering like a star, she joins the festal band.

III.

How blest (if truth may entertain
 Coy fancy with a bolder strain)
 The HELVETIAN Girl—who daily braves,
 In her light skiff, the tossing waves,
 And quits the bosom of the deep
 Only to climb the rugged steep!
 —Say whence that modulated shout!
 From Wood-nymph of Diana's throng?
 Or does the greeting to a rout
 Of giddy Bacchanals belong?
 Jubilant outcry! rock and glade
 Resounded—but the voice obeyed
 The breath of an Helvetic Maid.

IV.

Her beauty dazzles the thick wood;
 Her courage animates the flood;
 Her steps the elastic green-sward meets
 Returning unreluctant sweets;
 The mountains (as ye heard) rejoice
 Aloud, saluted by her voice!
 Blithe Paragon of Alpine grace,
 Be as thou art—for through thy veins
 The blood of Heroes runs its race!
 And nobly wilt thou brook the chains
 That, for the virtuous, Life prepares;
 The fetters which the Matron wears;
 The patriot Mother's weight of anxious cares!

V.

* 'Sweet HIGHLAND Girl! a very shower
 Of beauty was thy earthly dower,'
 When thou didst flit before mine eyes,
 Gay Vision under sullen skies,
 While Hope and Love around thee played,
 Near the rough falls of Inversneyd!
 Have they, who nursed the blossom, seen
 No breach of promise in the fruit?
 Was joy, in following joy, as keen
 As grief can be in grief's pursuit?
 When youth had flown did hope still bless
 Thy goings—or the cheerfulness
 Of innocence survive to mitigate distress?

VI.

But from our course why turn—to tread
 A way with shadows overspread;
 Where what we gladliest would believe
 Is feared as what may most deceive?
 Bright Spirit, not with amaranth crowned
 But heath-bells from thy native ground.
 Time cannot thin thy flowing hair,
 Nor take one ray of light from Thee;
 For in my Fancy thou dost share
 The gift of immortality;
 And there shall bloom, with Thee allied,
 The Votaress by Lugano's side;
 And that intrepid Nymph, on Uri's steep, descried!

XXIX.

THE COLUMN INTENDED BY BUONAPARTE FOR A TRI-
 UMPHAL EDIFICE IN MILAN, NOW LYING BY THE
 WAY-SIDE IN THE SIMPLON PASS.

AMBITION—following down this far-famed slope
 Her Pioneer, the snow-dissolving Sun,
 While clarions prate of kingdoms to be won—
 Perchance, in future ages, here may stop;

* See address to a Highland Girl, p. 221.

Taught to mistrust her flattering horoscope
 By admonition from this prostrate Stone!
 Memento unscripted of Pride o'erthrown;
 Vanity's hieroglyphic; a choice trope
 In Fortune's rhetoric. Daughter of the Rock,
 Rest where thy course was stayed by Power divine!
 The Soul transported sees, from hint of thine,
 Crimes which the great Avenger's hand provoke,
 Hears combats whistling o'er the ensanguined heath:
 What groans! what shrieks! what quietness in
 death!

XXX.

STANZAS,

COMPOSED IN THE SIMPLON PASS.

VALLOMBROSA! I longed in thy shadiest wood
 To slumber, reclined on the moss-covered floor,
 To listen to ANIO's precipitous flood,
 When the stillness of evening hath deepened its roar;
 To range through the Temples of PÆSTUM, to muse
 In POMPEII preserved by her burial in earth;
 On pictures to gaze where they drank in their hues;
 And murmur sweet songs on the ground of their
 birth!

The beauty of Florence, the grandeur of Rome,
 Could I leave them unseen, and not yield to regret!
 With a hope (and no more) for a season to come,
 Which ne'er may discharge the magnificent debt!
 Thou fortunate Region! whose Greatness inured
 Awoke to new life from its ashes and dust;
 Twice-glorified fields! if in sadness I turned
 From your infinite marvels, the sadness was just.

Now, risen ere the light-footed Chamois retires
 From dew-sprinkled grass to heights guarded with
 snow,
 Toward the mists that hang over the land of my Sires,
 From the climate of myrtles contented I go.
 Thy thoughts become bright like yon edging of Pines
 On the steep's lofty verge: how it blacken'd the
 air!

But, touched from behind by the Sun, it now shines
 With threads that seem part of his own silver hair.

Though the toil of the way with dear Friends we
 divide,
 Though by the same zephyr our temples be fanned
 As we rest in the cool orange-bower side by side,
 A yearning survives which few hearts shall with-
 stand:

Each step hath its value while homeward we move;—
 O joy when the girdle of England appears!
 What moment in life is so conscious of love,
 Of love in the heart made more happy by tears!

XXXI.

ECHO, UPON THE GEMMI.

WHAT beast of chase hath broken from the cover?
 Stern GEMMI listens to as full a cry,
 As multitudinous a harmony
 Of sounds as rang the heights of Latmos over,
 When, from the soft couch of her sleeping Lover,
 Up-starting, Cynthia skimmed the mountain-dew
 In keen pursuit—and gave, where'er she flew,
 Impetuous motion to the Stars above her.
 A solitary Wolf-dog, ranging on
 Through the bleak concave, wakes this wondrous
 chime
 Of æry voices locked in unison,—
 Faint—far-off—near—deep—solemn and sublime!—
 So, from the body of one guilty deed,
 A thousand ghostly fears, and haunting thoughts,
 proceed!

XXXII.

PROCESSIONS.

SUGGESTED ON A SABBATH MORNING IN THE VALE OF CHAMOUNT.

To appease the Gods; or public thanks to yield;
 Or to solicit knowledge of events,
 Which in her breast Futurity concealed;
 And that the past might have its true intents
 Feelingly told by living monuments—
 Mankind of yore were prompted to devise
 Rites such as yet Persepolis presents
 Graven on her cankered walls, solemnities
 That moved in long array before admiring eyes.

The Hebrews thus, carrying in joyful state
 Thick boughs of palm, and willows from the brook,
 Marched round the altar—to commemorate
 How, when their course they through the desert
 took,
 Guided by signs which ne'er the sky forsook,
 They lodged in leafy tents and cabins low;
 Green boughs were borne, while, for the blast that
 shook
 Down to the earth the walls of Jericho,
 Shouts rise, and storms of sound from lifted trum-
 pets blow!

And thus, in order, 'mid the sacred grove
Fed in the Libyan waste by gushing wells,
The priests and damsels of Ammonian Jove
Provoked responses with shrill canticles ;
While, in a ship begirt with silver bells,
They round his altar bore the hornèd God,
Old Cham, the solar Deity, who dwells
Aloft, yet in a tilting vessel rode,
When universal sea the mountains overflowed.

Why speak of Roman Poms ? the haughty claims
Of Chiefs triumphant after ruthless wars ;
The feast of Neptune—and the Cereal Games,
With images, and crowns, and empty cars ;
The dancing Salii—on the shields of Mars
Smiting with fury ; and a deeper dread
Scattered on all sides by the hideous jars
Of Corybantian cymbals, while the head
Of Cybelè was seen, sublimely turreted !

At length a Spirit more subdued and soft
Appeared—to govern Christian pageantries :
The Cross, in calm procession, borne aloft
Moved to the chant of sober litanies.
Even such, this day, came wafted on the breeze
From a long train—in hooded vestments fair
Enwrapt—and winding, between Alpine trees
Spiry and dark, around their House of prayer,
Below the icy bed of bright ARGENTIERE.

Still in the vivid freshness of a dream,
The pageant haunts me as it met our eyes !
Still, with those white-robed Shapes—a living
Stream,
The glacier Pillars join in solemn guise *
For the same service, by mysterious ties ;
Numbers exceeding credible account
Of number, pure and silent Votaries
Issuing or issued from a wintry fount ;
The impenetrable heart of that exalted Mount !

They, too, who send so far a holy gleam
While they the Church engird with motion slow,
A product of that awful Mountain seem,
Poured from his vaults of everlasting snow ;
Not virgin lilies marshalled in bright row,
Not swans descending with the stealthy tide,
A livelier sisterly resemblance show
Than the fair Forms, that in long order glide,
Bear to the glacier band—those Shapes aloft
descried.

Trembling, I look upon the secret springs
Of that licentious craving in the mind
To act the God among external things,
To bind, on apt suggestion, or unbind ;
And marvel not that antique Faith inclined
To crowd the world with metamorphosis,
Vouchsafed in pity or in wrath assigned ;
Such insolent temptations wouldst thou miss,
Avoid these sights ; nor brood o'er Fable's dark
abyss !

XXXIII.

ELEGIAC STANZAS.

The lamented Youth whose untimely death gave occasion to these elegiac verses, was Frederick William Goddard, from Boston in North America. He was in his twentieth year, and had resided for some time with a clergyman in the neighbourhood of Geneva for the completion of his education. Accompanied by a fellow-pupil, a native of Scotland, he had just set out on a Swiss tour when it was his misfortune to fall in with a friend of mine who was hastening to join our party. The travellers, after spending a day together on the road from Berne and at Soleure, took leave of each other at night, the young men having intended to proceed directly to Zurich. But early in the morning my friend found his new acquaintances, who were informed of the object of his journey, and the friends he was in pursuit of, equipped to accompany him. We met at Lucerne the succeeding evening, and Mr. G. and his fellow-student became in consequence our travelling companions for a couple of days. We ascended the Righi together ; and, after contemplating the sunrise from that noble mountain, we separated at an hour and on a spot well suited to the parting of those who were to meet no more. Our party descended through the valley of our Lady of the Snow, and our late companions, to Art. We had hoped to meet in a few weeks at Geneva ; but on the third succeeding day (on the 21st of August) Mr. Goddard perished, being overset in a boat while crossing the lake of Zurich. His companion saved himself by swimming, and was hospitably received in the mansion of a Swiss gentleman (M. Keller) situated on the eastern coast of the lake. The corpse of poor Goddard was cast ashore on the estate of the same gentleman, who generously performed all the rites of hospitality which could be rendered to the dead as well as to the living. He caused a handsome mural monument to be erected in the church of Küsnacht, which records the premature fate of the young American, and on the shores too of the lake the traveller may read an inscription pointing out the spot where the body was deposited by the waves.

LULLED by the sound of pastoral bells,
Rude Nature's Pilgrims did we go,
From the dread summit of the Queen *
Of mountains, through a deep ravine,
Where, in her holy chapel, dwells
'Our Lady of the Snow.'

* See Note.

* Mount Righi—Regina Montium.

The sky was blue, the air was mild ;
Free were the streams and green the bowers ;
As if, to rough assaults unknown,
The genial spot had *ever* shown
A countenance that as sweetly smiled—
The face of summer-hours.

And we were gay, our hearts at ease ;
With pleasure dancing through the frame
We journeyed ; all we knew of care—
Our path that straggled here and there ;
Of trouble—but the fluttering breeze ;
Of Winter—but a name.

If foresight could have rent the veil
Of three short days—but hush—no more !
Calm is the grave, and calmer none
Than that to which thy cares are gone,
Thou Victim of the stormy gale ;
Asleep on ZÜRICH'S shore !

Oh GODDARD ! what art thou ?—a name—
A sunbeam followed by a shade !
Nor more, for aught that time supplies,
The great, the experienced, and the wise :
Too much from this frail earth we claim,
And therefore are betrayed.

We met, while festive mirth ran wild,
Where, from a deep lake's mighty urn,
Forth slips, like an enfranchised slave,
A sea-green river, proud to lave,
With current swift and undefiled,
The towers of old LUCERNE.

We parted upon solemn ground
Far-lifted towards the unfading sky ;
But all our thoughts were *then* of Earth,
That gives to common pleasures birth ;
And nothing in our hearts we found
That prompted even a sigh.

Fetch, sympathising Powers of air,
Fetch, ye that post o'er seas and lands,
Herbs moistened by Virginian dew,
A most untimely grave to strew,
Whose turf may never know the care
Of *kindred* human hands !

Beloved by every gentle Muse
He left his Transatlantic home :
Europe, a realised romance,
Had opened on his eager glance ;
What present bliss !—what golden views !
What stores for years to come !

Though lodged within no vigorous frame,
His soul her daily tasks renewed,
Blithe as the lark on sun-gilt wings
High poised—or as the wren that sings
In shady places, to proclaim
Her modest gratitude.

Not vain is sadly-uttered praise ;
The words of truth's memorial vow
Are sweet as morning fragrance shed
From flowers mid GOLDAU'S ruins bred ;
As evening's fondly-lingering rays,
On RICH'S silent brow.

Lamented Youth ! to thy cold clay
Fit obsequies the Stranger paid ;
And piety shall guard the Stone
Which hath not left the spot unknown
Where the wild waves resigned their prey—
And *that* which marks thy bed.

And, when thy Mother weeps for Thee,
Lost Youth ! a solitary Mother ;
This tribute from a casual Friend
A not unwelcome aid may lend,
To feed the tender luxury,
The rising pang to smother *.

XXXIV.

SKY-PROSPECT—FROM THE PLAIN OF FRANCE.

Lo ! in the burning west, the craggy nape
Of a proud Ararat ! and, thereupon,
The Ark, her melancholy voyage done !
Yon rampant cloud mimics a lion's shape ;
There, combats a huge crocodile—agate
A golden spear to swallow ! and that brown
And massy grove, so near yon blazing town,
Stirs and recedes—destruction to escape !
Yet all is harmless—as the Elysian shades
Where Spirits dwell in undisturbed repose—
Silently disappears, or quickly fades :
Meek Nature's evening comment on the shows
That for oblivion take their daily birth
From all the fuming vanities of Earth !

* The persuasion here expressed was not groundless. The first human consolation that the afflicted Mother felt, was derived from this tribute to her son's memory, a fact which the author learned, at his own residence, from her Daughter, who visited Europe some years afterwards.—Goldau is one of the villages desolated by the fall of part of the Mountain Rossberg.

XXXV.

ON BEING STRANDED NEAR THE HARBOUR OF
BOULOGNE*.

Why cast ye back upon the Gallic shore
Ye furious waves! a patriotic Son
Of England—who in hope her coast had won,
His project crowned, his pleasant travel o'er?
Well—let him pace this noted beach once more,
That gave the Roman his triumphal shells;
That saw the Corsican his cap and bells
Haughtily shake, a dreaming Conqueror!—
Enough: my Country's cliffs I can behold,
And proudly think, beside the chafing sea,
Of checked ambition, tyranny controlled,
And folly cursed with endless memory:
These local recollections ne'er can cloy;
Such ground I from my very heart enjoy!

XXXVI.

AFTER LANDING—THE VALLEY OF DOVER.

Nov. 1820.

WHERE be the noisy followers of the game [passed
Which faction breeds; the turmoil where? that
Through Europe, echoing from the newsmen's blast,
And filled our hearts with grief for England's shame.
Peace greets us;—rambling on without an aim
We mark majestic herds of cattle, free
To ruminate, couched on the grassy lea;
And hear far-off the mellow horn proclaim
The Season's harmless pastime. Ruder sound
Stirs not; enrapt I gaze with strange delight,
While consciousnesses, not to be disowned,
Here only serve a feeling to invite
That lifts the spirit to a calmer height,
And makes this rural stillness more profound.

XXXVII.

AT DOVER.

FROM the Pier's head, musing, and with increase
Of wonder, I have watched this sea-side Town,
Under the white cliff's battlemented crown,
Hushed to a depth of more than Sabbath peace:
The streets and quays are thronged, but why disown
Their natural utterance: whence this strange
release

From social noise—silence elsewhere unknown?—
A Spirit whispered, "Let all wonder cease;
Ocean's o'erpowering murmurs have set free
Thy sense from pressure of life's common din;
As the dread Voice that speaks from out the sea
Of God's eternal Word, the Voice of Time
Doth deaden, shoeks of tumult, shrieks of crime,
The shouts of folly, and the groans of sin."

* See Note.

XXXVIII.

DESULTORY STANZAS,

UPON RECEIVING THE PRECEDING SHEETS FROM THE PRESS.

Is then the final page before me spread,
Nor further outlet left to mind or heart?
Presumptuous Book! too forward to be read,
How can I give thee licence to depart?
One tribute more: unbidden feelings start
Forth from their coverts; slighted objects rise;
My spirit is the scene of such wild art
As on Parnassus rules, when lightning flies,
Visibly leading on the thunder's harmonies.

All that I saw returns upon my view,
All that I heard comes back upon my ear,
All that I felt this moment doth renew;
And where the foot with no unmanly fear
Recoiled—and wings alone could travel—there
I move at ease; and meet contending themes
That press upon me, crossing the career
Of recollections vivid as the dreams [streams,
Of midnight,—cities, plains, forests, and mighty

Where Mortal never breathed I dare to sit
Among the interior Alps, gigantic crew,
Who triumphed o'er diluvian power!—and yet
What are they but a wreck and residue,
Whose only business is to perish?—true
To which sad course, these wrinkled Sons of Time
Labour their proper greatness to subdue;
Speaking of death alone, beneath a clime
Where life and rapture flow in plenitude sublime.

Fancy hath flung for me an airy bridge
Across thy long deep Valley, furious Rhone!
Arch that *here* rests upon the granite ridge
Of Monte Rosa—*there* on frailer stone
Of secondary birth, the Jung-frau's cone;
And, from that arch, down-looking on the Vale
The aspect I behold of every zone;
A sea of foliage, tossing with the gale,
Blythe Autumn's purple crown, and Winter's icy
mail!

Far as ST. MAURICE, from yon eastern FORKS*,
Down the main avenue my sight can range:
And all its branchy vales, and all that lurks
Within them, church, and town, and hut, and grange
For my enjoyment meet in vision strange;
Snows, torrents;—to the region's utmost bound,
Life, Death, in amicable interchange;—

* At the head of the Vallais. See Note.

But list! the avalanche—the hush profound
That follows—yet more awful than that awful sound!

Is not the chamois suited to his place?
The eagle worthy of her ancestry?
—Let Empires fall; but ne'er shall Ye disgrace
Your noble birthright, ye that occupy
Your council-seats beneath the open sky,
On Sarnen's Mount *, there judge of fit and right,
In simple democratic majesty;
Soft breezes fanning your rough brows—the might
And purity of nature spread before your sight!

From this appropriate Court, renowned LUCERNE
Calls me to pace her honoured Bridge*—that cheers
The Patriot's heart with pictures rude and stern,
In uncouth Chronicle of glorious years.
Like portraiture, from loftier source, endears
That work of kindred frame, which spans the lake
Just at the point of issue, where it fears
The form and motion of a stream to take;
Where it begins to stir, yet voiceless as a snake.

Volumes of sound, from the Cathedral rolled,
This long-roofed Vista penetrate—but see,

* See Notes.

One after one, its tablets, that unfold
The whole design of Scripture history;
From the first tasting of the fatal Tree,
Till the bright Star appeared in eastern skies,
Announcing, ONE was born mankind to free;
His acts, his wrongs, his final sacrifice;
Lessons for every heart, a Bible for all eyes.

Our pride misleads, our timid likings kill.
—Long may these homely Works devised of old,
These simple efforts of Helvetian skill,
Aid, with congenial influence, to uphold
The State,—the Country's destiny to mould;
Turning, for them who pass, the common dust
Of servile opportunity to gold;
Filling the soul with sentiments august—
The beautiful, the brave, the holy, and the just!

No more; Time halts not in his noiseless march—
Nor turns, nor winds, as doth the liquid flood;
Life slips from underneath us, like that arch
Of airy workmanship whereon we stood,
Earth stretched below, heaven in our neighbourhood.
Go forth, my little Book! pursue thy way;
Go forth, and please the gentle and the good;
Nor be a whisper stifled, if it say
That treasures, yet untouched, may grace some
future Lay.

MEMORIALS OF A TOUR IN ITALY.

1837.

TO HENRY CRABB ROBINSON.

COMPANION ! by whose buoyant Spirit cheered,
In whose experience trusting, day by day
Treasures I gained with zeal that neither feared
The toils nor felt the crosses of the way,

These records take, and happy should I be
Were but the Gift a meet Return to thee
For kindnesses that never ceased to flow,
And prompt self-sacrifice to which I owe
Far more than any heart but mine can know.

RYDAL MOUNT, Feb. 14th, 1842

W. WORDSWORTH.

THE Tour of which the following Poems are very inadequate remembrances was shortened by report, too well founded, of the prevalence of Cholera at Naples. To make some amends for what was reluctantly left unseen in the South of Italy, we visited the Tuscan Sanctuaries among the Apennines, and the principal Italian Lakes among the Alps. Neither of those lakes, nor of Venice, is there any notice in these Poems, chiefly because I have touched upon them elsewhere. See, in particular, "Descriptive Sketches," "Memorials of a Tour on the Continent in 1830" and a Sonnet upon the extinction of the Venetian Republic.

I.

MUSINGS NEAR AQUAPENDENTE.

April, 1837.

YE Apennines ! with all your fertile vales
Deeply embosomed, and your winding shores
Of either sea, an Islander by birth,
A Mountaineer by habit, would resound
Your praise, in meet accordance with your claims
Bestowed by Nature, or from man's great deeds
Inherited :—presumptuous thought !—it fled
Like vapour, like a towering cloud, dissolved.
Not, therefore, shall my mind give way to sadness ;—
Yon snow-white torrent-fall, plumb down it drops
Yet ever hangs or seems to hang in air,
Lulling the leisure of that high perched town,
AQUAPENDENTE, in her lofty site
Its neighbour and its namesake—town, and flood
Forth flashing out of its own gloomy chasm
Bright sunbeams—the fresh verdure of this lawn
Strewn with grey rocks, and on the horizon's verge,
O'er intervenient waste, through glimmering haze,
Unquestionably kenned, that cone-shaped hill
With fractured summit, no indifferent sight
To travellers, from such comforts as are thine,
Bleak Radicofani ! escaped with joy—
These are before me ; and the varied scene
May well suffice, till noon-tide's sultry heat

Relax, to fix and satisfy the mind
Passive yet pleased. What ! with this Broom in
flower

Close at my side ! She bids me fly to greet
Her sisters, soon like her to be attired
With golden blossoms opening at the feet
Of my own Fairfield. The glad greeting given,
Given with a voice and by a look returned
Of old companionship, Time counts not minutes
Ere, from accustomed paths, familiar fields,
The local Genius hurries me aloft,
Transported over that cloud-wooing hill,
Seat Sandal, a fond suitor of the clouds,
With dream-like smoothness, to Helvellyn's top,
There to alight upon crisp moss and range,
Obtaining ampler boon, at every step,
Of visual sovereignty—hills multitudinous,
(Not Apennine can boast of fairer) hills
Pride of two nations, wood and lake and plains,
And prospect right below of deep coves shaped
By skeleton arms, that, from the mountain's trunk
Extended, clasp the winds, with mutual moan
Struggling for liberty, while undismayed
The shepherd struggles with them. Onward thence
And downward by the skirt of Greenside fell,
And by Glenridding-screens, and low Glencoign,
Places forsaken now, though loving still
The muses, as they loved them in the days

the old minstrels and the border bards.—
 At here am I fast bound ; and let it pass,
 The simple rapture ;—who that travels far
 Feed his mind with watchful eyes could share
 Wish to share it?—One there surely was,
 "The Wizard of the North," with anxious hope
 Brought to this genial climate, when disease
 Layed upon body and mind—yet not the less
 And his sunk eye kindled at those dear words
 At spake of bards and minstrels ; and his spirit
 Had flown with mine to old Helvellyn's brow,
 Where once together, in his day of strength,
 He stood rejoicing, as if earth were free
 From sorrow, like the sky above our heads.

Years followed years, and when, upon the eve
 Of his last going from Tweed-side, thought turned,
 By another's sympathy was led,
 To this bright land, Hope was for him no friend,
 Knowledge no help ; Imagination shaped
 His promise. Still, in more than ear-deep seats,
 He lives for me, and cannot but survive
 The tone of voice which wedded borrowed words
 To sadness not their own, when, with faint smile
 Directed by intent to take from speech its edge,
 He said, "When I am there, although 'tis fair,
 I will be another Yarrow." Prophecy
 More than fulfilled, as gay Campania's shores
 He witnessed, and the city of seven hills,
 The sparkling fountains, and her mouldering tombs ;
 All more than all, that Eminence which showed
 His splendours, seen, not felt, the while he stood
 A few short steps (painful they were) apart
 From Tasso's Convent-haven, and retired grave.

Peace to their Spirits ! why should Poesy
 Be led to the lure of vain regret, and hover
 In gloom on wings with confidence outspread
 To move in sunshine?—Utter thanks, my Soul !
 Tempered with awe, and sweetened by compassion
 To them who in the shades of sorrow dwell,
 But I—so near the term to human life
 Appointed by man's common heritage,
 As frail as the frailest, one withal (if that
 I deserve a thought) but little known to fame—
 Am free to rove where Nature's loveliest looks,
 At her noblest relics, history's rich bequests,
 Tried to reanimate and but feebly cheered
 The whole world's Darling—free to rove at will
 Or high and low, and if requiring rest,
 Rest from enjoyment only.

Thanks poured forth
 For what thus far hath blessed my wanderings,
 Thanks

Fervent but humble as the lips can breathe
 Where gladness seems a duty—let me guard
 Those seeds of expectation which the fruit
 Already gathered in this favoured Land
 Enfolds within its core. The faith be mine,
 That He who guides and governs all, approves
 When gratitude, though disciplined to look
 Beyond these transient spheres, doth wear a crown
 Of earthly hope put on with trembling hand ;
 Nor is least pleased, we trust, when golden beams,
 Reflected through the mists of age, from hours
 Of innocent delight, remote or recent,
 Shoot but a little way—'tis all they can—
 Into the doubtful future. Who would keep
 Power must resolve to cleave to it through life,
 Else it deserts him, surely as he lives.
 Saints would not grieve nor guardian angels frown
 If one—while tossed, as was my lot to be,
 In a frail bark urged by two slender oars
 Over waves rough and deep, that, when they broke,
 Dashed their white foam against the palace walls
 Of Genoa the superb—should there be led
 To meditate upon his own appointed tasks,
 However humble in themselves, with thoughts
 Raised and sustained by memory of Him
 Who oftentimes within those narrow bounds
 Rocked on the surge, there tried his spirit's strength
 And grasp of purpose, long ere sailed his ship
 To lay a new world open.

Nor less prized
 Be those impressions which incline the heart
 To mild, to lowly, and to seeming weak,
 Bend that way her desires. The dew, the storm—
 The dew whose moisture fell in gentle drops
 On the small hyssop destined to become,
 By Hebrew ordinance devoutly kept,
 A purifying instrument—the storm
 That shook on Lebanon the cedar's top,
 And as it shook, enabling the blind roots
 Further to force their way, endowed its trunk
 With magnitude and strength fit to uphold
 The glorious temple—did alike proceed
 From the same gracious will, were both an offspring
 Of bounty infinite.

Between Powers that aim
 Higher to lift their lofty heads, impelled
 By no profane ambition, Powers that thrive
 By conflict, and their opposites, that trust
 In lowliness—a mid-way tract there lies
 Of thoughtful sentiment for every mind
 Pregnant with good. Young, Middle-aged, and Old,
 From century on to century, must have known
 The emotion—nay, more fitly were it said—
 The blest tranquillity that sunk so deep

Into my spirit, when I paced, enclosed
 In Pisa's Campo Santo, the smooth floor
 Of its Arcades paved with sepulchral slabs,
 And through each window's open fret-work looked
 O'er the blank Area of sacred earth
 Fetched from Mount Calvary, or haply delved
 In precincts nearer to the Saviour's tomb,
 By hands of men, humble as brave, who fought
 For its deliverance—a capacious field
 That to descendants of the dead it holds
 And to all living mute memento breathes,
 More touching far than aught which on the walls
 Is pictured, or their epitaphs can speak,
 Of the changed City's long-departed power,
 Glory, and wealth, which, perilous as they are,
 Here did not kill, but nourished, Piety.
 And, high above that length of cloistral roof,
 Peering in air and backed by azure sky,
 To kindred contemplations ministers
 The Baptistery's dome, and that which swells
 From the Cathedral pile; and with the twain
 Conjoined in prospect mutable or fixed
 (As hurry on in eagerness the feet,
 Or pause) the summit of the Leaning-tower.
 Nor less remuneration waits on him
 Who having left the Cemetery stands
 In the Tower's shadow, of decline and fall
 Admonished not without some sense of fear,
 Fear that soon vanishes before the sight
 Of splendor unextinguished, pomp unscathed,
 And beauty unimpaired. Grand in itself,
 And for itself, the assemblage, grand and fair
 To view, and for the mind's consenting eye
 A type of age in man, upon its front
 Bearing the world-acknowledged evidence
 Of past exploits, nor fondly after more
 Struggling against the stream of destiny,
 But with its peaceful majesty content.
 —Oh what a spectacle at every turn
 The Place unfolds, from pavement skinned with
 moss,

Or grass-grown spaces, where the heaviest foot
 Provokes no echoes, but must softly tread;
 Where Solitude with Silence paired stops short
 Of Desolation, and to Ruin's scythe
 Decay submits not.

But where'er my steps
 Shall wander, chiefly let me cull with care
 Those images of genial beauty, oft
 Too lovely to be pensive in themselves
 But by reflexion made so, which do best
 And fittest serve to crown with fragrant wreaths
 Life's cup when almost filled with years, like mine.
 —How lovely robed in forenoon light and shade,

Each ministering to each, didst thou appear
 Savona, Queen of territory fair
 As aught that marvellous coast thro' all its length
 Yields to the Stranger's eye. Remembrance holds
 As a selected treasure thy one cliff,
 That, while it wore for melancholy crest
 A shattered Convent, yet rose proud to have
 Clinging to its steep sides a thousand herbs
 And shrubs, whose pleasant looks gave proof how
 kind

The breath of air can be where earth had else
 Seemed churlish. And behold, both far and near
 Garden and field all decked with orange bloom,
 And peach and citron, in Spring's mildest breeze
 Expanding; and, along the smooth shore curved
 Into a natural port, a tideless sea,
 To that mild breeze with motion and with voice
 Softly responsive; and, attuned to all
 Those vernal charms of sight and sound, appeared
 Smooth space of turf which from the guardian fort
 Sloped seaward, turf whose tender April green,
 In coolest climes too fugitive, might even here
 Plead with the sovereign Sun for longer stay
 Than his unmitigated beams allow,
 Nor plead in vain, if beauty could preserve,
 From mortal change, aught that is born on earth
 Or doth on time depend.

While on the brink
 Of that high Convent-crested cliff I stood,
 Modest Savona! over all did brood
 A pure poetic Spirit—as the breeze,
 Mild—as the verdure, fresh—the sunshine, bright—
 Thy gentle Chiabrera!—not a stone,
 Mural or level with the trodden floor,
 In Church or Chapel, if my curious quest
 Missed not the truth, retains a single name
 Of young or old, warrior, or saint, or sage,
 To whose dear memories his sepulchral verse
 Paid simple tribute, such as might have flowed
 From the clear spring of a plain English heart,
 Say rather, one in native fellowship
 With all who want not skill to couple grief
 With praise, as genuine admiration prompts.
 The grief, the praise, are severed from their due
 Yet in his page the records of that worth
 Survive, uninjured;—glory then to words,
 Honour to word-preserving Arts, and hail
 Ye kindred local influences that still,
 If Hope's familiar whispers merit faith,
 Await my steps when they the breezy height
 Shall range of philosophic Tusculum;
 Or Sabine vales explored inspire a wish
 To meet the shade of Horace by the side
 Of his Bandusian fount; or I invoke

is presence to point out the spot where once
 e sate, and eulogized with earnest pen
 eace, leisure, freedom, moderate desires ;
 nd all the immunities of rural life
 xtolled, behind Vacuina's crumbling fane.
 r let me loiter, soothed with what is given
 or asking more, on that delicious Bay,
 arthenope's Domain—Virgilian haunt,
 lustrated with never-dying verse,
 nd, by the Poet's laurel-shaded tomb,
 ge after age to Pilgrims from all lands
 ndeared.

And who—if not a man as cold
 a heart as dull in brain—while pacing ground
 osen by Rome's legendary Bards, high minds
 ut of her early struggles well inspired
 o localize heroic acts—could look
 pon the spots with undelighted eye,
 hough even to their last syllable the Lays
 nd very names of those who gave them birth
 ave perished ?—Verily, to her utmost depth,
 uagination feels what Reason fears not
 o recognize, the lasting virtue lodged
 a those bold fictions that, by deeds assigned
 o the Valerian, Fabian, Curian Race,
 nd others like in fame, created Powers
 ith attributes from History derived,
 y Poesy irradiate, and yet graced,
 hrough marvellous felicity of skill,
 ith something more propitious to high aims
 an either, pent within her separate sphere,
 an oft with justice claim.

And not disdaining
 union with those primeval energies
 o virtue consecrate, stoop ye from your height
 ristian Traditions ! at my Spirit's call
 escend, and, on the brow of ancient Rome
 s she survives in ruin, manifest
 our glories mingled with the brightest hues
 f her memorial halo, fading, fading,
 ut never to be extinct while Earth endures.
 come, if undishonoured by the prayer,
 rom all her Sanctuaries !—Open for my feet
 e Catacombs, give to mine eyes a glimpse
 f the Devout, as, mid your glooms convened
 or safety, they of yore enclasped the Cross
 n knees that ceased from trembling, or intoned
 heir orisons with voices half-suppressed,
 ut sometimes heard, or fancied to be heard,
 ven at this hour.

And thou Mamertine prison,
 to that vault receive me from whose depth
 sues, revealed in no presumptuous vision,
 albeit lifting human to divine,

A Saint, the Church's Rock, the mystic Keys
 Grasped in his hand ; and lo ! with upright sword
 Prefiguring his own impendent doom,
 The Apostle of the Gentiles ; both prepared
 To suffer pains with heathen scorn and hate
 Inflicted ;—blessed Men, for so to Heaven
 They follow their dear Lord !

Time flows—nor winds,
 Nor stagnates, nor precipitates his course,
 But many a benefit borne upon his breast
 For human-kind sinks out of sight, is gone,
 No one knows how ; nor seldom is put forth
 An angry arm that snatches good away,
 Never perhaps to reappear. The Stream
 Has to our generation brought and brings
 Innumerable gains ; yet we, who now
 Walk in the light of day, pertain full surely
 To a chilled age, most pitiaibly shut out
 From that which *is* and actuates, by forms,
 Abstractions, and by lifeless fact to fact
 Minutely linked with diligence uninspired,
 Unrectified, unguided, unsustained,
 By godlike insight. To this fate is doomed
 Science, wide-spread and spreading still as be
 Her conquests, in the world of sense made known.
 So with the internal mind it fares ; and so
 With morals, trusting, in contempt or fear
 Of vital principle's controlling law,
 To her purblind guide Expediency ; and so
 Suffers religious faith. Elate with view
 Of what is won, we overlook or scorn
 The best that should keep pace with it, and must,
 Else more and more the general mind will droop,
 Even as if bent on perishing. There lives
 No faculty within us which the Soul
 Can spare, and humblest earthly Weal demands,
 For dignity not placed beyond her reach,
 Zealous co-operation of all means
 Given or acquired, to raise us from the mire,
 And liberate our hearts from low pursuits.
 By gross Utilities enslaved we need
 More of ennobling impulse from the past,
 If to the future aught of good must come
 Sounder and therefore holier than the ends
 Which, in the giddiness of self-applause,
 We covet as supreme. O grant the crown
 That Wisdom wears, or take his treacherous staff
 From Knowledge !—If the Muse, whom I have
 served

This day, be mistress of a single pearl
 Fit to be placed in that pure diadem ;
 Then, not in vain, under these chesnut boughs
 Reclined, shall I have yielded up my soul
 To transports from the secondary founts

Flowing of time and place, and paid to both
 Due homage; nor shall fruitlessly have striven,
 By love of beauty moved, to enshrine in verse
 Accordant meditations, which in times
 Vexed and disordered, as our own, may shed
 Influence, at least among a scattered few,
 To soberness of mind and peace of heart
 Friendly; as here to my repose hath been
 This flowering broom's dear neighbourhood, the
 light

And murmur issuing from yon pendent flood,
 And all the varied landscape. Let us now
 Rise, and to-morrow greet magnificent Rome.*

II.

THE PINE OF MONTE MARIO AT ROME.

I saw far off the dark top of a Pine
 Look like a cloud—a slender stem the tie
 That bound it to its native earth—poised high
 'Mid evening hues, along the horizon line,
 Striving in peace each other to outshine.
 But when I learned the Tree was living there,
 Saved from the sordid axe by Beaumont's care,
 Oh, what a gush of tenderness was mine!
 The rescued Pine-tree, with its sky so bright
 And cloud-like beauty, rich in thoughts of home,
 Death-parted friends, and days too swift in flight,
 Supplanted the whole majesty of Rome
 (Then first apparent from the Pincian Height)
 Crowned with St. Peter's everlasting Dome †.

III.

AT ROME.

Is this, ye Gods, the Capitolian Hill?
 Yon petty Steep in truth the fearful Rock,
 Tarpeian named of yore, and keeping still
 That name, a local Phantom proud to mock
 The Traveller's expectation?—Could our Will
 Destroy the ideal Power within, 'twere done
 Thro' what men see and touch,—slaves wandering on,
 Impelled by thirst of all but Heaven-taught skill.
 Full oft, our wish obtained, deeply we sigh;
 Yet not unrecompensed are they who learn,
 From that depression raised, to mount on high
 With stronger wing, more clearly to discern
 Eternal things; and, if need be, defy
 Change, with a brow not insolent, though stern.

* See note.

† See note.

IV.

AT ROME.—REGRETS.—IN ALLUSION TO NIEBUHR
AND OTHER MODERN HISTORIANS.

THOSE old credulities, to nature dear,
 Shall they no longer bloom upon the stock
 Of History, stript naked as a rock
 'Mid a dry desert? What is it we hear?
 The glory of Infant Rome must disappear,
 Her morning splendors vanish, and their place
 Know them no more. If Truth, who veiled her face
 With those bright beams yet hid it not, must stee
 Henceforth a humbler course perplexed and slow
 One solace yet remains for us who came
 Into this world in days when story lacked
 Severe research, that in our hearts we know
 How, for exciting youth's heroic flame,
 Assent is power, belief the soul of fact.

V.

CONTINUED.

COMPLACENT Fictions were they, yet the same
 Involved a history of no doubtful sense,
 History that proves by inward evidence
 From what a precious source of truth it came.
 Ne'er could the boldest Eulogist have dared
 Such deeds to paint, such characters to frame,
 But for coeval sympathy prepared
 To greet with instant faith their loftiest claim.
 None but a noble people could have loved
 Flattery in Ancient Rome's pure-minded style:
 Not in like sort the Runic Scald was moved;
 He, nursed 'mid savage passions that defile
 Humanity, sang feats that well might call
 For the blood-thirsty mead of Odin's riotous Ha

VI.

PLEA FOR THE HISTORIAN.

FORBEAR to deem the Chronicler unwise,
 Ungentle, or untouched by seemly ruth,
 Who, gathering up all that Time's envious tooth
 Has spared of sound and grave realities,
 Firmly rejects those dazzling flatteries,
 Dear as they are to unsuspecting Youth,
 That might have drawn down Clio from the skies
 To vindicate the majesty of truth.
 Such was her office while she walked with men,
 A Muse, who, not unmindful of her Sire
 All-ruling Jove, whate'er the theme might be
 Revered her Mother, sage Mnemosyne,
 And taught her faithful servants how the lyre
 Should animate, but not mislead, the pen*.

* Quem virum—Iyra—
—sumes celebrare Clio?

VII.

AT ROME.

THEY—who have seen the noble Roman's scorn
Break forth at thought of laying down his head,
When the blank day is over, garreted
In his ancestral palace, where, from morn
To night, the desecrated floors are worn
By feet of purse-proud strangers; they—who have
read

In one meek smile, beneath a peasant's shed,
How patiently the weight of wrong is borne;
They—who have heard some learned Patriot treat
Of freedom, with mind grasping the whole theme
From ancient Rome, downwards through that
bright dream

Of Commonwealths, each city a starlike seat
Of rival glory; they—fallen Italy—
Nor must, nor will, nor can, despair of Thee!

VIII.

NEAR ROME, IN SIGHT OF ST. PETER'S.

LONG has the dew been dried on tree and lawn;
O'er man and beast a not unwelcome boon
Is shed, the languor of approaching noon;
To shady rest withdrawing or withdrawn
Mute are all creatures, as this couchant fawn,
Save insect-swarms that hum in air afloat,
Save that the Cock is crowing, a shrill note,
Startling and shrill as that which roused the dawn.
—Heard in that hour, or when, as now, the nerve
Shrinks from the note as from a mis-timed thing,
Oft for a holy warning may it serve,
Charged with remembrance of *his* sudden sting,
His bitter tears, whose name the Papal Chair
And yon resplendent Church are proud to bear.

IX.

AT ALBANO.

DAYS passed—and Monte Calvo would not clear
His head from mist; and, as the wind sobbed
through

Albano's dripping Ilex avenue,
My dull forebodings in a Peasant's ear
Found casual vent. She said, "Be of good cheer;
Our yesterday's procession did not sue
in vain; the sky will change to sunny blue,
Thanks to our Lady's grace." I smiled to hear,
But not in scorn:—the Matron's Faith may lack
The heavenly sanction needed to ensure
Fulfilment; but, we trust, her upward track
Stops not at this low point, nor wants the lure
Of flowers the Virgin without fear may own,
For by her Son's blest hand the seed was sown.

X.

NEAR Anio's stream, I spied a gentle Dove
Perched on an olive branch, and heard her cooing
'Mid new-born blossoms that soft airs were wooing,
While all things present told of joy and love.
But restless Fancy left that olive grove
To hail the exploratory Bird renewing
Hope for the few, who, at the world's undoing,
On the great flood were spared to live and move.
O bounteous Heaven! signs true as dove and bough
Brought to the ark are coming evermore,
Given though we seek them not, but, while we plough
This sea of life without a visible shore,
Do neither promise ask nor grace implore
In what alone is ours, the living Now.

XI.

FROM THE ALBAN HILLS, LOOKING TOWARDS ROME.

FORGIVE, illustrious Country! these deep sighs,
Heaved less for thy bright plains and hills bestrown
With monuments decayed or overthrown,
For all that tottering stands or prostrate lies,
Than for like scenes in moral vision shown,
Ruin perceived for keener sympathies;
Faith crushed, yet proud of weeds, her gaudy crown;
Virtues laid low, and mouldering energies.
Yet why prolong this mournful strain?—Fallen
Power,

Thy fortunes, twice exalted, might provoke
Verse to glad notes prophetic of the hour
When thou, uprisen, shalt break thy double yoke,
And enter, with prompt aid from the Most High,
On the third stage of thy great destiny.

XII.

NEAR THE LAKE OF THRASYMENE.

WHEN here with Carthage Rome to conflict came,
An earthquake, mingling with the battle's shock,
Checked not its rage; unfelt the ground did rock,
Sword dropped not, javelin kept its deadly aim.—
Now all is sun-bright peace. Of that day's shame,
Or glory, not a vestige seems to endure,
Save in this Rill that took from blood the name*
Which yet it bears, sweet Stream! as crystal pure.
So may all trace and sign of deeds aloof
From the true guidance of humanity,
Thro' Time and Nature's influence, purify
Their spirit; or, unless they for reproof
Or warning serve, thus let them all, on ground
That gave them being, vanish to a sound.

* Sanguinetto.

XIII.

NEAR THE SAME LAKE.

For action born, existing to be tried,
 Powers manifold we have that intervene
 To stir the heart that would too closely screen
 Her peace from images to pain allied.
 What wonder if at midnight, by the side
 Of Sanguinetto or broad Thrasymene,
 The clang of arms is heard, and phantoms glide,
 Unhappy ghosts in troops by moonlight seen ;
 And singly thine, O vanquished Chief ! whose corse,
 Unburied, lay hid under heaps of slain :
 But who is He ?—the Conqueror. Would he force
 His way to Rome ? Ah, no,—round hill and plain
 Wandering, he haunts, at fancy's strong command,
 This spot—his shadowy death-cup in his hand.

XIV.

THE CUCKOO AT LAVERNA.

MAY 25TH, 1837.

LIST—'twas the Cuckoo.—O with what delight
 Heard I that voice ! and catch it now, though faint,
 Far off and faint, and melting into air,
 Yet not to be mistaken. Hark again !
 Those louder cries give notice that the Bird,
 Although invisible as Echo's self,
 Is wheeling hitherward. Thanks, happy Creature,
 For this unthought-of greeting !

While allured

From vale to hill, from hill to vale led on,
 We have pursued, through various lands, a long
 And pleasant course ; flower after flower has blown,
 Embellishing the ground that gave them birth
 With aspects novel to my sight ; but still
 Most fair, most welcome, when they drank the dew
 In a sweet fellowship with kinds beloved,
 For old remembrance sake. And oft—where Spring
 Display'd her richest blossoms among files
 Of orange-trees bedecked with glowing fruit
 Ripe for the hand, or under a thick shade
 Of Ilex, or, if better suited to the hour,
 The lightsome Olive's twinkling canopy—
 Oft have I heard the Nightingale and Thrush
 Blending as in a common English grove
 Their love-songs ; but, where'er my feet might roam,
 Whate'er assemblages of new and old,
 Strange and familiar, might beguile the way,
 A gratulation from that vagrant Voice
 Was wanting ;—and most happily till now.

For see, Laverna ! mark the far-famed Pile,
 High on the brink of that precipitous rock,
 Implanted like a Fortress, as in truth
 It is, a Christian Fortress, garrisoned
 In faith and hope, and dutiful obedience,
 By a few Monks, a stern society,
 Dead to the world and scorning earth-born joys.
 Nay—though the hopes that drew, the fears that
 drove,
 St. Francis, far from Man's resort, to abide
 Among these sterile heights of Apennine,
 Bound him, nor, since he raised yon House, have
 ceased

To bind his spiritual Progeny, with rules
 Stringent as flesh can tolerate and live ;
 His milder Genius (thanks to the good God
 That made us) over those severe restraints
 Of mind, that dread heart-freezing discipline,
 Doth sometimes here predominate, and works
 By unsought means for gracious purposes ;
 For earth through heaven, for heaven, by changeful
 earth,
 Illustrated, and mutually endeared.

Rapt though He were above the power of sense,
 Familiarly, yet out of the cleansed heart
 Of that once sinful Being overflowed
 On sun, moon, stars, the nether elements,
 And every shape of creature they restrain,
 Divine affections ; and with beast and bird
 (Stilled from afar—such marvel story tells—
 By casual outbreak of his passionate words,
 And from their own pursuits in field or grove
 Drawn to his side by look or act of love
 Humane, and virtue of his innocent life)
 He wont to hold companionship so free,
 So pure, so fraught with knowledge and delight,
 As to be likened in his Followers' minds
 To that which our first Parents, ere the fall
 From their high state darkened the Earth with fear
 Held with all Kinds in Eden's blissful bowers.

Then question not that, 'mid the austere Band,
 Who breathe the air he breathed, tread where he trod
 Some true Partakers of his loving spirit
 Do still survive, and, with those gentle hearts
 Consorted, Others, in the power, the faith,
 Of a baptized imagination, prompt
 To catch from Nature's humblest monitors
 Whate'er they bring of impulses sublime.

Thus sensitive must be the Monk, though pale
 With fasts, with vigils worn, depressed by years,
 Whom in a sunny glade I chanced to see,

Upon a pine-tree's storm-uprooted trunk,
Seated alone, with forehead sky-ward raised,
Hands clasped above the crucifix he wore
Appended to his bosom, and lips closed
By the joint pressure of his musing mood
And habit of his vow. That ancient Man—
Nor haply less the Brother whom I marked,
As we approached the Convent gate, aloft
Looking far forth from his aerial cell,
A young Ascetic—Poet, Hero, Sage,
He might have been, Lover belike he was—
If they received into a conscious ear
The notes whose first faint greeting startled me,
Whose sedulous iteration thrilled with joy
My heart—may have been moved like me to think,
Ah! not like me who walk in the world's ways,
On the great Prophet, styled the *Voice of One*
Crying amid the wilderness, and given,
Now that their snows must melt, their herbs and
flowers

Revive, their obstinate winter pass away,
That awful name to Thee, thee, simple Cuckoo,
Wandering in solitude, and evermore
Foretelling and proclaiming, ere thou leave
This thy last haunt beneath Italian skies
To carry thy glad tidings over heights
To loftier, and to climes more near the Pole.

Voice of the Desert, fare-thee-well; sweet Bird!
If that substantial title please thee more,
Farewell!—but go thy way, no need hast thou
Of a good wish sent after thee; from bower
To bower as green, from sky to sky as clear,
Thy gentle breezes waft—or airs that meet
Thy course and sport around thee softly fan—
Fill Night, descending upon hill and vale,
Grants to thy mission a brief term of silence,
And folds thy pinions up in blest repose.

XV.

AT THE CONVENT OF CAMALDOLI.

GRIEVE for the Man who hither came bereft,
And seeking consolation from above;
Nor grieve the less that skill to him was left
To paint this picture of his lady-love:
Can she, a blessed saint, the work approve?
And O, good Brethren of the cowl, a thing
So fair, to which with peril he must cling,
Destroy in pity, or with care remove.
That bloom—those eyes—can they assist to bind
Thoughts that would stray from Heaven? The
dream must cease

To be; by Faith, not sight, his soul must live;
Else will the enamoured Monk too surely find
How wide a space can part from inward peace
The most profound repose his cell can give.

XVI.

CONTINUED.

THE world forsaken, all its busy cares
And stirring interests shunned with desperate flight,
All trust abandoned in the healing might
Of virtuous action; all that courage dares,
Labour accomplishes, or patience bears—
Those helps rejected, they, whose minds perceive
How subtly works man's weakness, sighs may heave
For such a One beset with cloistral snares.
Father of Mercy! rectify his view,
If with his vows this object ill agree;
Shed over it thy grace, and thus subdue
Imperious passion in a heart set free:—
That earthly love may to herself be true,
Give him a soul that cleaveth unto thee*.

XVII.

AT THE EREMITA OR UPPER CONVENT OF CAMALDOLI.

WHAT aim had they, the Pair of Monks, in size
Enormous, dragged, while side by side they sate,
By panting steers up to this convent gate?
How, with empurpled cheeks and pampered eyes,
Dare they confront the lean austerities
Of Brethren who, here fixed, on Jesu wait
In sackcloth, and God's anger deprecate
Through all that humbles flesh and mortifies?
Strange contrast!—verily the world of dreams,
Where mingle, as for mockery combined,
Things in their very essences at strife,
Shows not a sight incongruous as the extremes
That everywhere, before the thoughtful mind,
Meet on the solid ground of waking life†.

XVIII.

AT VALLOMBROSA.

Thick as autumnal leaves that strew the brooks
In Vallombrosa, where Etrurian shades
High over-arch'd embower‡.

PARADISE LOST.

"VALLOMBROSA—I longed in thy shadiest wood
To slumber, reclined on the moss-covered floor!"
Fond wish that was granted at last, and the Flood,
That lulled me asleep bids me listen once more.

* See Note.

† See note.

‡ See for the two *first lines*, "Stanzas composed in the Simplon Pass."

Its murmur how soft! as it falls down the steep,
Near that Cell—yon sequestered Retreat high in
air—

Where our Milton was wont lonely vigils to keep
For converse with God, sought through study and
prayer.

The Monks still repeat the tradition with pride,
And its truth who shall doubt? for his Spirit is
here;

In the cloud-piercing rocks doth her grandeur abide,
In the pines pointing heavenward her beauty
austere;

In the flower-besprent meadows his genius we trace
Turned to humbler delights, in which youth might
confide,

That would yield him fit help while prefiguring that
Place

Where, if Sin had not entered, Love never had died.

When with life lengthened out came a desolate time,
And darkness and danger had compassed him round,
With a thought he would flee to these haunts of his
prime,

And here once again a kind shelter be found.
And let me believe that when nightly the Muse
Did waft him to Sion, the glorified hill,
Here also, on some favoured height, he would choose
To wander, and drink inspiration at will

Vallombrosa! of thee I first heard in the page
Of that holiest of Bards, and the name for my mind
Had a musical charm, which the winter of age
And the changes it brings had no power to unbind.
And now, ye Miltonian shades! under you
I repose, nor am forced from sweet fancy to part,
While your leaves I behold and the brooks they
will strew,
And the realised vision is clasped to my heart.

Even so, and unblamed, we rejoice as we may
In Forms that must perish, frail objects of sense;
Unblamed—if the Soul be intent on the day
When the Being of Beings shall summon her hence.
For he and he only with wisdom is blest
Who, gathering true pleasures wherever they grow,
Looks up in all places, for joy or for rest,
To the Fountain whence Time and Eternity flow.

XIX.

AT FLORENCE.

UNDER the shadow of a stately Pile,
The dome of Florence, pensive and alone,
Nor giving heed to aught that passed the while,
I stood, and gazed upon a marble stone,
The laurelled Dante's favourite seat. A throne,
In just esteem, it rivals; though no style
Be there of decoration to beguile
The mind, depressed by thought of greatness flown.
As a true man, who long had served the lyre,
I gazed with earnestness, and dared no more.
But in his breast the mighty Poet bore
A Patriot's heart, warm with undying fire.
Bold with the thought, in reverence I sate down,
And, for a moment, filled that empty Throne.

XX.

BEFORE THE PICTURE OF THE BAPTIST, BY RAPHAEL,
IN THE GALLERY AT FLORENCE.

THE Baptist might have been ordain'd to cry
Forth from the towers of that huge Pile, wherein
His Father served Jehovah; but how win
Due audience, how for aught but scorn defy
The obstinate pride and wanton revelry
Of the Jerusalem below, her sin
And folly, if they with united din
Drown not at once mandate and prophecy?
Therefore the Voice spake from the Desert, thence
To Her, as to her opposite in peace,
Silence, and holiness, and innocence,
To Her and to all Lands its warning sent,
Crying with earnestness that might not cease,
"Make straight a highway for the Lord—repent!"

XXI.

AT FLORENCE.—FROM MICHAEL ANGELO.

RAPT above earth by power of one fair face,
Hers in whose sway alone my heart delights,
I mingle with the blest on those pure heights
Where Man, yet mortal, rarely finds a place.
With Him who made the Work that Work accords
So well, that by its help and through his grace
I raise my thoughts, inform my deeds and words,
Clasping her beauty in my soul's embrace.
Thus, if from two fair eyes mine cannot turn,
I feel how in their presence doth abide
Light which to God is both the way and guide;
And, kindling at their lustre, if I burn,
My noble fire emits the joyful ray
That through the realms of glory shines for aye.

XXII.

AT FLORENCE.—FROM M. ANGELO.

ETERNAL Lord! eased of a cumbrous load,
 And loosened from the world, I turn to Thee;
 Shun, like a shattered bark, the storm, and flee
 To thy protection for a safe abode.
 The crown of thorns, hands pierced upon the tree,
 The meek, benign, and lacerated face,
 To a sincere repentance promise grace,
 To the sad soul give hope of pardon free.
 With justice mark not Thou, O Light divine,
 My fault, nor hear it with thy sacred ear;
 Neither put forth that way thy arm severe;
 Wash with thy blood my sins; thereto incline
 More readily the more my years require
 Help, and forgiveness speedy and entire.

XXIII.

AMONG THE RUINS OF A CONVENT IN THE APENNINES.

YE Trees! whose slender roots entwine
 Altars that piety neglects;
 Whose infant arms enclasp the shrine
 Which no devotion now respects;
 If not a straggler from the herd
 Here ruminate, nor shrouded bird,
 Chanting her low-voiced hymn, take pride
 In aught that ye would grace or hide—
 How sadly is your love misplaced,
 Fair Trees, your bounty run to waste!

Ye, too, wild Flowers! that no one heeds,
 And ye—full often spurned as weeds—
 In beauty clothed, or breathing sweetness
 From fractured arch and mouldering wall—
 Do but more touchingly recal
 Man's headstrong violence and Time's fleetness,
 Making the precincts ye adorn
 Appear to sight still more forlorn.

XXIV.

IN LOMBARDY.

SEE, where his difficult way that Old Man wins
 Bent by a load of Mulberry leaves!—most hard
 Appears *his* lot, to the small Worm's compared,
 For whom his toil with early day begins.
 Acknowledging no task-master, at will
 (As if her labour and her ease were twins)
She seems to work, at pleasure to lie still;—
 And softly sleeps within the thread she spins.

So fare they—the Man serving as her Slave.
 Ere long their fates do each to each conform:
 Both pass into new being,—but the Worm,
 Transfigured, sinks into a hopeless grave;
His volant Spirit will, he trusts, ascend
 To bliss unbounded, glory without end.

XXV.

AFTER LEAVING ITALY.

FAIR Land! Thee all men greet with joy; how few,
 Whose souls take pride in freedom, virtue, fame,
 Part from thee without pity dyed in shame:
 I could not—while from Venice we withdrew,
 Led on till an Alpine strait confined our view
 Within its depths, and to the shore we came
 Of Lago Morto, dreary sight and name,
 Which o'er sad thoughts a sadder colouring threw.
 Italia! on the surface of thy spirit,
 (Too aptly emblem'd by that torpid lake)
 Shall a few partial breezes only creep?—
 Be its depths quickened; what thou dost inherit
 Of the world's hopes, dare to fulfil; awake,
 Mother of Heroes, from thy death-like sleep!

XXVI.

CONTINUED.

As indignation mastered grief, my tongue
 Spake bitter words; words that did ill agree
 With those rich stores of Nature's imagery,
 And divine Art, that fast to memory clung—
 Thy gifts, magnificent Region, ever young
 In the sun's eye, and in his sister's sight
 How beautiful! how worthy to be sung
 In strains of rapture, or subdued delight!
 I feign not; witness that unwelcome shock
 That followed the first sound of German speech,
 Caught the far-winding barrier Alps among.
 In that announcement, greeting seemed to mock
 Parting; the casual word had power to reach
 My heart, and filled that heart with conflict strong.

XXVII.

COMPOSED AT RYDAL ON MAY MORNING, 1838.

IF with old love of you, dear Hills! I share
 New love of many a rival image brought
 From far, forgive the wanderings of my thought:
 Nor art thou wronged, sweet May! when I compare
 Thy present birth-morn with thy last, so fair,
 So rich to me in favours. For my lot
 Then was, within the famed Egerian Grot
 To sit and muse, fanned by its dewy air

Mingling with thy soft breath ! That morning too,
 Warblers I heard their joy unbosoming
 Amid the sunny, shadowy, Colyseum ;
 Heard them, unchecked by aught of saddening hue,
 For victories there won by flower-crowned Spring,
 Chant in full choir their innocent *Te Deum*.

XXVIII.

THE PILLAR OF TRAJAN.

WHERE towers are crushed, and unforbidden weeds
 O'er mutilated arches shed their seeds ;
 And temples, doomed to milder change, unfold
 A new magnificence that vies with old ;
 Firm in its pristine majesty hath stood
 A votive Column, spared by fire and flood :—
 And, though the passions of man's fretful race
 Have never ceased to eddy round its base,
 Not injured more by touch of meddling hands
 Than a lone obelisk, 'mid Nubian sands,
 Or aught in Syrian deserts left to save
 From death the memory of the good and brave.
 Historic figures round the shaft embost
 Ascend, with lineaments in air not lost :
 Still as he turns, the charmed spectator sees
 Group winding after group with dream-like ease ;
 Triumphs in sunbright gratitude displayed,
 Or softly stealing into modest shade.
 —So, pleased with purple clusters to entwine
 Some lofty elm-tree, mounts the daring vine ;
 The woodbine so, with spiral grace, and breathes
 Wide-spreading odours from her flowery wreaths.

Borne by the Muse from rills in shepherds' ears
 Murmuring but one smooth story for all years,
 I gladly commune with the mind and heart
 Of him who thus survives by classic art,
 His actions witness, venerate his mien,
 And study Trajan as by Pliny seen ;
 Behold how fought the Chief whose conquering
 sword
 Stretched far as earth might own a single lord ;

In the delight of moral prudence schooled,
 How feelingly at home the Sovereign ruled ;
 Best of the good—in pagan faith allied
 To more than Man, by virtue deified.

Memorial Pillar ! 'mid the wrecks of Time
 Preserve thy charge with confidence sublime—
 The exultations, pomps, and cares of Rome,
 Whence half the breathing world received its doom ;
 Things that recoil from language ; that, if shown
 By apter pencil, from the light had flown.
 A Pontiff, Trajan *here* the Gods implores,
There greets an Embassy from Indian shores ;
 Lo ! he harangues his cohorts—*there* the storm
 Of battle meets him in authentic form !
 Unharnessed, naked, troops of Moorish horse
 Sweep to the charge ; more high, the Dacian force,
 To hoof and finger mailed ;—yet, high or low,
 None bleed, and none lie prostrate but the foe ;
 In every Roman, through all turns of fate,
 Is Roman dignity inviolate ;
 Spirit in him pre-eminent, who guides,
 Supports, adorns, and over all presides ;
 Distinguished only by inherent state
 From honoured Instruments that round him wait ;
 Rise as he may, his grandeur scorns the test
 Of outward symbol, nor will deign to rest
 On aught by which another is deprest.
 —Alas ! that One thus disciplined could toil
 To enslave whole nations on their native soil ;
 So emulous of Macedonian fame,
 That, when his age was measured with his aim,
 He drooped, 'mid else unclouded victories,
 And turned his eagles back with deep-drawn sighs :
 O weakness of the Great ! O folly of the Wise !

Where now the haughty Empire that was spread
 With such fond hope ? her very speech is dead ;
 Yet glorious Art the power of Time defies,
 And Trajan still, through various enterprise,
 Mounts, in this fine illusion, toward the skies :
 Still are we present with the imperial Chief,
 Nor cease to gaze upon the bold Relief
 Till Rome, to silent marble unconfined,
 Becomes with all her years a vision of the Mind.

THE EGYPTIAN MAID ;

OR,

THE ROMANCE OF THE WATER LILY.

[For the names and persons in the following poem, see the "History of the renowned Prince Arthur and his fights of the Round Table;" for the rest the Author is answerable; only it may be proper to add, that the Lotus, with the bust of the Goddess appearing to rise out of the full-blown flower, was suggested by the beautiful work of ancient art, once included among the Townley Marbles, and now in the British Museum.]

WHILE Merlin paced the Cornish sands,
Forth-looking toward the rocks of Scilly,
The pleased Enchanter was aware
Of a bright Ship that seemed to hang in air,
Yet was she work of mortal hands,
And took from men her name—THE WATER LILY.

Soft was the wind, that landward blew ;
And, as the Moon, o'er some dark hill ascendant,
Grows from a little edge of light
To a full orb, this Pinnacle bright
Became, as nearer to the coast she drew,
More glorious, with spread sail and streaming
pendant.

Upon this wingèd Shape so fair
Gaze Merlin gazed with admiration :
Her lineaments, thought he, surpass
Aught that was ever shown in magic glass ;
Was ever built with patient care ;
At a touch, produced by happiest transformation.

Now, though a Mechanist, whose skill
Shames the degenerate grasp of modern science,
Grave Merlin (and belike the more
For practising occult and perilous lore)
Was subject to a freakish will
That sapped good thoughts, or scared them with
defiance.

Provoked to envious spleen, he cast
An altered look upon the advancing Stranger
Whom he had hailed with joy, and cried,
"My Art shall help to tame her pride—"
Anon the breeze became a blast,
And the waves rose, and sky portended danger.

With thrilling word, and potent sign
Traced on the beach, his work the Sorcerer
urges ;
The clouds in blacker clouds are lost,
Like spiteful Fiends that vanish, crossed
By Fiends of aspect more malign ;
And the winds roused the Deep with fiercer
scourges.

But worthy of the name she bore
Was this Sea-flower, this buoyant Galley ;
Supreme in loveliness and grace
Of motion, whether in the embrace
Of trusty anchorage, or scudding o'er
The main flood roughened into hill and valley.

Behold, how wantonly she laves
Her sides, the Wizard's craft confounding ;
Like something out of Ocean sprung
To be for ever fresh and young,
Breasts the sea-flashes, and huge waves
Top-gallant high, rebounding and rebounding !

But Ocean under magic heavens,
And cannot spare the Thing he cherished :
Ah ! what avails that she was fair,
Luminous, blithe, and debonair ?
The storm has stripped her of her leaves ;
The Lily floats no longer !—She hath perished.

Grieve for her,—she deserves no less ;
So like, yet so unlike, a living Creature !
No heart had she, no busy brain ;
Though loved, she could not love again ;
Though pitied, *feel* her own distress ;
Nor aught that troubles us, the fools of Nature.

Yet is there cause for gushing tears ;
 So richly was this Galley laden,
 A fairer than herself she bore,
 And, in her struggles, cast ashore ;
 A lovely One, who nothing hears
 Of wind or wave—a meek and guileless Maiden.

Into a cave had Merlin fled
 From mischief, caused by spells himself had
 muttered ;
 And while, repentant all too late,
 In moody posture there he sate,
 He heard a voice, and saw, with half-raised head,
 A Visitant by whom these words were uttered ;

“ On Christian service this frail Bark
 Sailed ” (hear me, Merlin !) “ under high pro-
 tection,
 Though on her prow a sign of heathen power
 Was carved—a Goddess with a Lily flower,
 The old Egyptian’s emblematic mark
 Of joy immortal and of pure affection.

Her course was for the British strand ;
 Her freight, it was a Damsel peerless ;
 God reigns above, and Spirits strong
 May gather to avenge this wrong
 Done to the Princess, and her Land
 Which she in duty left, sad but not cheerless.

And to Caerleon’s loftiest tower
 Soon will the Knights of Arthur’s Table
 A cry of lamentation send ;
 And all will weep who there attend,
 To grace that Stranger’s bridal hour,
 For whom the sea was made unnavigable.

Shame ! should a Child of royal line
 Die through the blindness of thy malice ! ”
 Thus to the Necromancer spake
 Nina, the Lady of the Lake,
 A gentle Sorceress, and benign,
 Who ne’er embittered any good man’s chalice.

“ What boots,” continued she, “ to mourn ?
 To expiate thy sin endeavour :
 From the bleak isle where she is laid,
 Fetched by our art, the Egyptian Maid
 May yet to Arthur’s court be borne
 Cold as she is, ere life be fled for ever.

My pearly Boat, a shining Light,
 That brought me down that sunless river,
 Will bear me on from wave to wave,
 And back with her to this sea-cave ;—
 Then Merlin ! for a rapid flight
 Through air, to thee my Charge will I deliver.

The very swiftest of thy cars
 Must, when my part is done, be ready ;
 Meanwhile, for further guidance, look
 Into thy own prophetic book ;
 And, if that fail, consult the Stars
 To learn thy course ; farewell ! be prompt and
 steady.”

This scarcely spoken, she again
 Was seated in her gleaming shallop,
 That, o’er the yet-distempered Deep,
 Pursued its way with bird-like sweep,
 Or like a steed, without a rein,
 Urged o’er the wilderness in sportive gallop.

Soon did the gentle Nina reach
 That Isle without a house or haven ;
 Landing, she found not what she sought,
 Nor saw of wreck or ruin aught
 But a carved Lotus cast upon the beach
 By the fierce waves, a flower in marble graven.

Sad relique, but how fair the while !
 For gently each from each retreating
 With backward curve, the leaves revealed
 The bosom half, and half concealed,
 Of a Divinity, that seemed to smile
 On Nina, as she passed, with hopeful greeting.

No quest was hers of vague desire,
 Of tortured hope and purpose shaken ;
 Following the margin of a bay,
 She spied the lonely Cast-away,
 Unmarred, unstripped of her attire,
 But with closed eyes,—of breath and bloom forsaken.

Then Nina, stooping down, embraced,
 With tenderness and mild emotion,
 The Damsel, in that trance embound ;
 And, while she raised her from the ground,
 And in the pearly shallop placed,
 Sleep fell upon the air, and stilled the ocean.

The turmoil hushed, celestial springs
 Of music opened, and there came a blending
 Of fragrance, underived from earth,
 With gleams that owed not to the sun their birth.
 And that soft rustling of invisible wings
 Which Angels make, on works of love descending

And Nina heard a sweeter voice
 Than if the Goddess of the flower had spoken :
 “ Thou hast achieved, fair Dame ! what none
 Less pure in spirit could have done ;
 Go, in thy enterprise rejoice !
 Air, earth, sea, sky, and heaven, success betoken !

So cheered, she left that Island bleak,
A bare-rock of the Scilly cluster;
And, as they traversed the smooth brine,
The self-illuminated Brigantine
Shed, on the Slumberer's cold wan cheek
And pallid brow, a melancholy lustre.

Fleet was their course, and when they came
To the dim cavern, whence the river
Issued into the salt-sea flood,
Merlin, as fixed in thought he stood,
Was thus accosted by the Dame;
Behold to thee my Charge I now deliver!

But where attends thy chariot—where?"—
Quoth Merlin, "Even as I was bidden,
So have I done; as trusty as thy barge
My vehicle shall prove—O precious Charge!
If this be sleep, how soft! if death, how fair!
Neh have my books disclosed, but the end is
hidden."

He spake; and gliding into view
Forth from the grotto's dimmest chamber
Came two mute Swans, whose plumes of dusky white
Changed, as the pair approached the light,
Drawing an ebon car, their hue
(like clouds of sunset) into lucid amber.

Once more did gentle Nina lift
The Princess, passive to all changes:
The car received her:—then up-went
Into the ethereal element
The Birds with progress smooth and swift
Thought, when through bright regions memory
ranges.

Sage Merlin, at the Slumberer's side,
Instructs the Swans their way to measure;
And soon Caerleon's towers appeared,
And notes of minstrelsy were heard
From rich pavilions spreading wide,
For some high day of long-expected pleasure.

Awe-stricken stood both Knights and Dames
Ere on firm ground the car alighted;
Eftsoons astonishment was past,—
For in that face they saw the last
Last lingering look of clay, that tames
pride; by which all happiness is blighted.

Said Merlin, "Mighty King, fair Lords,
Away with feast and tilt and tourney!
Ye saw, throughout this royal House,
Ye heard, a rocking marvellous
Of turrets, and a clash of swords
Shaken, as I closed my airy journey.

Lo! by a destiny well known
To mortals, joy is turned to sorrow;
This is the wished-for Bride, the Maid
Of Egypt, from a rock conveyed
Where she by shipwreck had been thrown;
Ill sight! but grief may vanish ere the morrow."

"Though vast thy power, thy words are weak,"
Exclaimed the King, "a mockery hateful;
Dutiful Child, her lot how hard!
Is this her piety's reward?
Those watery locks, that bloodless cheek!
O winds without remorse! O shore ungrateful!

Rich robes are fretted by the moth;
Towers, temples, fall by stroke of thunder;
Will that, or deeper thoughts, abate
A Father's sorrow for her fate?
He will repent him of his troth;
His brain will burn, his stout heart split asunder.

Alas! and I have caused this woe;
For, when my prowess from invading Neighbours
Had freed his Realm, he plighted word
That he would turn to Christ our Lord,
And his dear Daughter on a Knight bestow
Whom I should choose for love and matchless
labours.

Her birth was heathen; but a fence
Of holy Angels round her hovered:
A Lady added to my court
So fair, of such divine report
And worship, seemed a recompense
For fifty kingdoms by my sword recovered.

Ask not for whom, O Champions true!
She was reserved by me her life's betrayer;
She who was meant to be a bride
Is now a corse: then put aside
Vain thoughts, and speed ye, with observance due
Of Christian rites, in Christian ground to lay her."

"The tomb," said Merlin, "may not close
Upon her yet, earth hide her beauty;
Not froward to thy sovereign will
Esteem me, Liege! if I, whose skill
Wafted her hither, interpose
To check this pious haste of erring duty.

My books command me to lay bare
The secret thou art bent on keeping:
Here must a high attest be given,
What Bridegroom was for her ordained by
Heaven:
And in my glass significants there are
Of things that may to gladness turn this weeping.

For this, approaching, One by One,
Thy Knights must touch the cold hand of the
Virgin ;

So, for the favoured One, the Flower may bloom
Once more : but, if unchangeable her doom,
If life departed be for ever gone,
Some blest assurance, from this cloud emerging,

May teach him to bewail his loss ;
Not with a grief that, like a vapour, rises
And melts ; but grief devout that shall endure,
And a perpetual growth secure
Of purposes which no false thought shall cross,
A harvest of high hopes and noble enterprises."

"So be it," said the King ;—"anon,
Here, where the Princess lies, begin the trial ;
Knights each in order as ye stand
Step forth."—To touch the pallid hand
Sir Agravaine advanced ; no sign he won
From Heaven or earth ;—Sir Kaye had like denial.

Abashed, Sir Dinas turned away ;
Even for Sir Percival was no disclosure ;
Though he, devoutest of all Champions, ere
He reached that ebon car, the bier
Whereon diffused like snow the Damsel lay,
Full thrice had crossed himself in meek composure.

Imagine (but ye Saints ! who can ?)
How in still air the balance trembled—
The wishes, peradventure the despites
That overcame some not ungenerous Knights ;
And all the thoughts that lengthened out a span
Of time to Lords and Ladies thus assembled.

What patient confidence was here !
And there how many bosoms panted !
While drawing toward the car Sir Gawaine, mailed
For tournament, his beaver veiled,
And softly touched ; but, to his princely cheer
And high expectancy, no sign was granted.

Next, disencumbered of his harp,
Sir Tristram, dear to thousands as a brother,
Came to the proof, nor grieved that there ensued
No change ;—the fair Izonda he had wooed
With love too true, a love with pangs too sharp,
From hope too distant, not to dread another.

Not so Sir Launcelot ;—from Heaven's grace
A sign he craved, tired slave of vain contrition ;
The royal Guinever looked passing glad
When his touch failed.—Next came Sir Galahad ;
He paused, and stood entranced by that still face
Whose features he had seen in noontide vision.

For late, as near a murmuring stream
He rested 'mid an arbour green and shady,
Nina, the good Enchantress, shed
A light around his mossy bed ;
And, at her call, a waking dream
Prefigured to his sense the Egyptian Lady.

Now, while his bright-haired front he bowed,
And stood, far-kenned by mantle furred with
ermine,
As o'er the insensate Body hung
The enrapt, the beautiful, the young,
Belief sank deep into the crowd
That he the solemn issue would determine.

Nor deem it strange ; the Youth had worn
That very mantle on a day of glory,
The day when he achieved that matchless feat,
The marvel of the PERILOUS SEAT,
Which whosoe'er approached of strength was
shorn,
Though King or Knight the most renowned in story

He touched with hesitating hand—
And lo ! those Birds, far-famed through Love's
dominions,
The Swans, in triumph clap their wings ;
And their necks play, involved in rings,
Like sinless snakes in Eden's happy land ;—
"Mine is she," cried the Knight ;—again the
clapped their pinions.

"Mine was she—mine she is, though dead,
And to her name my soul shall cleave in sorrow ;
Whereat, a tender twilight streak
Of colour dawned upon the Damsel's cheek ;
And her lips, quickening with uncertain red,
Seemed from each other a faint warmth to borrow

Deep was the awe, the rapture high,
Of love emboldened, hope with dread entwining
When, to the mouth, relenting Death
Allowed a soft and flower-like breath,
Precursor to a timid sigh,
To lifted eyelids, and a doubtful shining.

In silence did King Arthur gaze
Upon the signs that pass away or tarry ;
In silence watched the gentle strife
Of Nature leading back to life ;
Then eased his soul at length by praise
Of God, and Heaven's pure Queen—the blissful
Mary.

Then said he, "Take her to thy heart,
 Sir Galahad! a treasure, that God giveth,
 Bound by indissoluble ties to thee
 Through mortal change and immortality;
 Be happy and unenvied, thou who art
 goodly Knight that hath no peer that liveth!"

Not long the Nuptials were delayed;
 And sage tradition still rehearses
 The pomp, the glory of that hour
 When toward the altar from her bower
 King Arthur led the Egyptian Maid,
 And Angels carolled these far-echoed verses;—

Who shrinks not from alliance
 Of evil with good Powers,
 To God proclaims defiance,
 And mocks whom he adores.

A Ship to Christ devoted
 From the Land of Nile did go;
 Alas! the bright Ship floated,
 An Idol at her prow.

By magic domination,
 The Heaven-permitted vent
 Of purblind mortal passion,
 Was wrought her punishment.

The Flower, the Form within it,
 What served they in her need?
 Her port she could not win it,
 Nor from mishap be freed.

The tempest overcame her,
 And she was seen no more;
 But gently, gently blame her—
 She cast a Pearl ashore.

The Maid to Jesu hearkened,
 And kept to him her faith,
 Till sense in death was darkened,
 Or sleep akin to death.

But Angels round her pillow
 Kept watch, a viewless band;
 And, billow favouring billow,
 She reached the destined strand.

Blest Pair! whate'er befal you,
 Your faith in Him approve
 Who from frail earth can call you
 To bowers of endless love!

1830.

THE RIVER DUDDON.

A SERIES OF SONNETS.

THE RIVER DUDDON rises upon Wrynose Fell, on the confines of Westmoreland, Cumberland, and Lancashire; and, having served as a boundary to the two last counties for the space of about twenty-five miles, enters the Irish Sea, between the Isle of Walney and the Lordship of Millum.

TO THE REV. DR. WORDSWORTH.

(WITH THE SONNETS TO THE RIVER DUDDON, AND OTHER POEMS IN THIS COLLECTION, 1820.)

The Minstrels played their Christmas tune
 To-night beneath my cottage-eaves;
 While, smitten by a lofty moon,
 The encircling laurels, thick with leaves,
 Gave back a rich and dazzling sheen,
 That overpowered their natural green.

Through hill and valley every breeze
 Had sunk to rest with folded wings;
 Keen was the air, but could not freeze,
 Nor check, the music of the strings;
 So stout and hardy were the band
 That scraped the chords with strenuous hand!

And who but listened?—till was paid
 Respect to every Inmate's claim:
 The greeting given, the music played,
 In honour of each household name,
 Duly pronounced with lusty call,
 And 'merry Christmas' wished to all!

O Brother! I revere the choice
 That took thee from thy native hills;
 And it is given thee to rejoice:
 Though public care full often tills
 (Heaven only witness of the toil)
 A barren and ungrateful soil.

Yet, would that Thou, with me and mine,
Hast heard this never-failing rite;
And seen on other faces shine
A true revival of the light
Which Nature and these rustic Powers,
In simple childhood, spread through ours!

For pleasure hath not ceased to wait
On these expected annual rounds;
Whether the rich man's sumptuous gate
Call forth the unelaborate sounds,
Or they are offered at the door
That guards the lowliest of the poor.

How touching, when, at midnight, sweep
Snow-muffled winds, and all is dark,
To hear—and sink again to sleep!
Or, at an earlier call, to mark,
By blazing fire, the still suspense
Of self-complacent innocence;

The mutual nod,—the grave disguise
Of hearts with gladness brimming o'er;
And some unbidden tears that rise
For names once heard, and heard no more;
Tears brightened by the serenade
For infant in the cradle laid.

Ah! not for emerald fields alone,
With ambient streams more pure and bright
Than fabled Cytherea's zone

I.

Not envying Latian shades—if yet they throw
A grateful coolness round that crystal Spring,
Blandusia, prattling as when long ago
The Sabine Bard was moved her praise to sing;
Careless of flowers that in perennial blow
Round the moist marge of Persian fountains cling;
Heedless of Alpine torrents thundering
Through ice-built arches radiant as heaven's bow;
I seek the birth-place of a native Stream.—
All hail, ye mountains! hail, thou morning light!
Better to breathe at large on this clear height
Than toil in needless sleep from dream to dream:
Pure flow the verse, pure, vigorous, free, and bright,
For Duddon, long-loved Duddon, is my theme!

II.

CHILD of the clouds! remote from every taint
Of sordid industry thy lot is cast;
Thine are the honours of the lofty waste;
Not seldom, when with heat the valleys faint,
Thy handmaid Frost with spangled tissue quaint
Thy cradle decks;—to chant thy birth, thou hast
No meaner Poet than the whistling Blast,
And Desolation is thy Patron-saint!

Glittering before the Thunderer's sight,
Is to my heart of hearts endeared
The ground where we were born and reared!

Hail, ancient Manners! sure defence,
Where they survive, of wholesome laws;
Remnants of love whose modest sense
Thus into narrow room withdraws;
Hail, Usages of pristine mould,
And ye that guard them, Mountains old!

Bear with me, Brother! quench the thought
That slights this passion, or condemns;
If thee fond Fancy ever brought
From the proud margin of the Thames,
And Lambeth's venerable towers,
To humbler streams, and greener bowers.

Yes, they can make, who fail to find,
Short leisure even in busiest days;
Moments, to cast a look behind,
And profit by those kindly rays
That through the clouds do sometimes steal,
And all the far-off past reveal.

Hence, while the imperial City's din
Beats frequent on thy satiate ear,
A pleased attention I may win
To agitations less severe,
That neither overwhelm nor cloy,
But fill the hollow vale with joy!

She guards thee, ruthless Power! who would
spare

Those mighty forests, once the bison's screen,
Where stalked the huge deer to his shaggy lair*
Through paths and alleys roofed with darkest green
Thousands of years before the silent air
Was pierced by whizzing shaft of hunter keen!

III.

How shall I paint thee?—Be this naked stone
My seat, while I give way to such intent;
Pleased could my verse, a speaking monument,
Make to the eyes of men thy features known.
But as of all those tripping lambs not one
Outruns his fellows, so hath Nature lent
To thy beginning nought that doth present
Peculiar ground for hope to build upon.
To dignify the spot that gives thee birth,
No sign of hoar Antiquity's esteem
Appears, and none of modern Fortune's care;
Yet thou thyself hast round thee shed a gleam
Of brilliant moss, instinct with freshness rare;
Prompt offering to thy Foster-mother, Earth!

* The deer alluded to is the Leigh, a gigantic species long since extinct.

IV.

AKE, cradled Nursling of the mountain, take
 his parting glance, no negligent adieu !
 Protean change seems wrought while I pursue
 the curves, a loosely-scattered chain doth make ;
 rather thou appear'st a glistening snake,
 silent, and to the gazer's eye untrue,
 bridding with sinuous lapse the rushes, through
 warf willows gliding, and by ferny brake.
 Starts from a dizzy steep the undaunted Rill
 bobbed instantly in garb of snow-white foam ;
 and laughing dares the Adventurer, who hath clomb
 high, a rival purpose to fulfil ;
 he let the dastard backward wend, and roam,
 seeking less bold achievement, where he will !

V.

LE listener, Duddon ! to the breeze that played
 with thy clear voice, I caught the fitful sound
 oft o'er sullen moss and craggy mound—
 fruitful solitudes, that seemed to upbraid
 the sun in heaven !—but now, to form a shade
 on Thee, green alders have together wound
 their foliage ; ashes flung their arms around ;
 and birch-trees risen in silver colonnade.
 And thou hast also tempted here to rise,
 and sheltering pines, this Cottage rude and grey ;
 whose ruddy children, by the mother's eyes
 tirelessly watched, sport through the summer day,
 thy pleased associates :—light as endless May
 an infant bosoms lonely Nature lies.

VI.

FLOWERS.

RE yet our course was graced with social trees
 lacked not old remains of hawthorn bowers,
 where small birds warbled to their paramours ;
 and, earlier still, was heard the hum of bees ;
 saw them ply their harmless robberies,
 and caught the fragrance which the sundry flowers,
 led by the stream with soft perpetual showers,
 tentuously yielded to the vagrant breeze.
 Here bloomed the strawberry of the wilderness ;
 the trembling eyebright showed her sapphire blue,
 the thyme her purple, like the blush of Even ;
 and if the breath of some to no caress
 invited, forth they peeped so fair to view,
 all kinds alike seemed favourites of Heaven.

VII.

“ CHANGE me, some God, into that breathing rose ! ”
 The love-sick Stripling fancifully sighs,
 The envied flower beholding, as it lies
 On Laura's breast, in exquisite repose ;
 Or he would pass into her bird, that throws
 The darts of song from out its wiry cage ;
 Enraptured,—could he for himself engage
 The thousandth part of what the Nymph bestows ;
 And what the little careless innocent
 Ungraciously receives. Too daring choice !
 There are whose calmer mind it would content
 To be an uncultured floweret of the glen,
 Fearless of plough and scythe ; or darkling wren
 That tunes on Duddon's banks her slender voice.

VIII.

WHAT aspect bore the Man who roved or fled,
 First of his tribe, to this dark dell—who first
 In this pellucid Current slaked his thirst ?
 What hopes came with him ? what designs were
 spread
 Along his path ? His unprotected bed [nursed
 What dreams encompassed ? Was the intruder
 In hideous usages, and rites accursed,
 That thinned the living and disturbed the dead ?
 No voice replies ;—both air and earth are mute ;
 And Thou, blue Streamlet, murmuring yield'st no
 more
 Than a soft record, that, whatever fruit
 Of ignorance thou might'st witness heretofore,
 Thy function was to heal and to restore,
 To soothe and cleanse, not madden and pollute !

IX.

THE STEPPING-STONES.

THE struggling Rill insensibly is grown
 Into a Brook of loud and stately march,
 Crossed ever and anon by plank or arch ;
 And, for like use, lo ! what might seem a zone
 Chosen for ornament—stone matched with stone
 In studied symmetry, with interspace
 For the clear waters to pursue their race
 Without restraint. How swiftly have they flown,
 Succeeding—still succeeding ! Here the Child
 Puts, when the high-swollen Flood runs fierce and
 wild,
 His budding courage to the proof ; and here
 Declining Manhood learns to note the sly
 And sure encroachments of infirmity,
 Thinking how fast time runs, life's end how near !

X.

THE SAME SUBJECT.

Not so that Pair whose youthful spirits dance
 With prompt emotion, urging them to pass ;
 A sweet confusion checks the Shepherd-lass ;
 Blushing she eyes the dizzy flood askance ;
 To stop ashamed—too timid to advance ;
 She ventures once again—another pause !
 His outstretched hand He tauntingly withdraws—
 She sues for help with piteous utterance !
 Chidden she chides again ; the thrilling touch
 Both feel, when he renews the wished-for aid :
 Ah ! if their fluttering hearts should stir too much,
 Should beat too strongly, both may be betrayed.
 The frolic Loves, who, from yon high rock, see
 The struggle, clap their wings for victory !

XI.

THE FAËRY CHASM.

No fiction was it of the antique age :
 A sky-blue stone, within this sunless cleft,
 Is of the very foot-marks unbereft
 Which tiny Elves impressed ;—on that smooth stage
 Dancing with all their brilliant equipage
 In secret revels—haply after theft
 Of some sweet Babe—Flower stolen, and coarse
 Weed left
 For the distracted Mother to assuage
 Her grief with, as she might !—But, where, oh !
 Is traceable a vestige of the notes [where
 That ruled those dances wild in character ?—
 Deep underground ? Or in the upper air,
 On the shrill wind of midnight ? or where floats
 O'er twilight fields the autumnal gossamer ?

XII.

HINTS FOR THE FANCY.

On, loitering Muse—the swift Stream chides us—
 Albeit his deep-worn channel doth immure [on !
 Objects immense portrayed in miniature,
 Wild shapes for many a strange comparison !
 Niagaras, Alpine passes, and anon
 Abodes of Naiads, calm abysses pure,
 Bright liquid maansons, fashioned to endure
 When the broad oak drops, a leafless skeleton,
 And the solidities of mortal pride,
 Palace and tower, are crumbled into dust !—
 The Bard who walks with Duddon for his guide,
 Shall find such toys of fancy thickly set :
 Turn from the sight, enamoured Muse—we must ;
 And, if thou canst, leave them without regret !

XIII.

OPEN PROSPECT.

HAIL to the fields—with Dwellings sprinkled o'er,
 And one small hamlet, under a green hill
 Clustering, with barn and byre, and spouting mill !
 A glance suffices ;—should we wish for more,
 Gay June would scorn us. But when bleak winds
 roar
 Through the stiff lance-like shoots of pollard ash,
 Dread swell of sound ! loud as the gusts that lash
 The matted forests of Ontario's shore
 By wasteful steel unsmitten—then would I
 Turn into port ; and, reckless of the gale,
 Reckless of angry Duddon sweeping by,
 While the warm hearth exalts the mantling ale,
 Laugh with the generous household heartily
 At all the merry pranks of Donnerdale !

XIV.

O MOUNTAIN Stream ! the Shepherd and his Cot
 Are privileged Inmates of deep solitude ;
 Nor would the nicest Anchorite exclude
 A field or two of brighter green, or plot
 Of tillage-ground, that seemeth like a spot
 Of stationary sunshine :—thou hast viewed
 These only, Duddon ! with their paths renewed
 By fits and starts, yet this contents thee not.
 Thee hath some awful Spirit impelled to leave,
 Utterly to desert, the haunts of men,
 Though simple thy companions were and few ;
 And through this wilderness a passage cleave
 Attended but by thy own voice, save when
 The clouds and fowls of the air thy way pursue !

XV.

FROM this deep chasm, where quivering sunbeams
 play
 Upon its loftiest crags, mine eyes behold
 A gloomy NICHE, capacious, blank, and cold ;
 A concave free from shrubs and mosses grey ;
 In semblance fresh, as if, with dire affray,
 Some Statue, placed amid these regions old
 For tutelary service, thence had rolled,
 Startling the flight of timid Yesterday !
 Was it by mortals sculptured ?—weary slaves
 Of slow endeavour ! or abruptly cast
 Into rude shape by fire, with roaring blast
 Tempestuously let loose from central caves !
 Or fashioned by the turbulence of waves,
 Then, when o'er highest hills the Deluge pass'd !

XVI.

AMERICAN TRADITION.

UCH fruitless questions may not long beguile
 r plague the fancy 'mid the sculptured shows
 conspicuous yet where Oroonoko flows ;
 here would the Indian answer with a smile
 imed at the White Man's ignorance the while,
 the GREAT WATERS telling how they rose,
 vered the plains, and, wandering where they
 ounted through every intricate defile, [chose,
 triumphant.—Inundation wide and deep,
 er which his Fathers urged, to ridge and steep
 se unapproachable, their buoyant way ;
 nd carved, on mural cliff's undreaded side,
 n, moon, and stars, and beast of chase or prey ;
 hate'er they sought, shunned, loved, or deified * !

XVII.

RETURN.

DARK plume fetch me from yon blasted yew,
 rched on whose top the Danish Raven croaks ;
 oft, the imperial Bird of Rome invokes
 parted ages, shedding where he flew
 ose fragments of wild wailing, that bestrew
 e clouds and thrill the chambers of the rocks ;
 d into silence hush the timorous flocks,
 at, calmly couching while the nightly dew
 istened each fleece, beneath the twinkling stars
 pt amid that lone Camp on Hardknot's height †,
 hose Guardians bent the knee to Jove and Mars :
 , near that mystic Round of Druid frame
 rdily sinking by its proper weight
 ep into patient Earth, from whose smooth breast
 it came !

XVIII.

SEATHWAITE CHAPEL.

RED Religion ! 'mother of form and fear,'
 ead arbitress of mutable respect,
 w rites ordaining when the old are wrecked,
 cease to please the fickle worshipper ;
 other of Love ! (that name best suits thee here)
 other of Love ! for this deep vale, protect
 ath's holy lamp, pure source of bright effect,
 ted to purge the vapoury atmosphere
 at seeks to stifle it ;—as in those days
 en this low Pile ‡ a Gospel Teacher knew,
 ose good works formed an endless retinue :
 Pastor such as Chaucer's verse pourtrays ;
 sh as the heaven-taught skill of Herbert drew ;
 d tender Goldsmith crowned with deathless
 praise !

XIX.

TRIBUTARY STREAM.

My frame hath often trembled with delight
 When hope presented some far-distant good,
 That seemed from heaven descending, like the flood
 Of yon pure waters, from their æry height
 Hurrying, with lordly Duddon to unite ;
 Who, 'mid a world of images impress
 On the calm depth of his transparent breast,
 Appears to cherish most that Torrent white,
 The fairest, softest, liveliest of them all !
 And seldom hath ear listened to a tune
 More lulling than the busy hum of Noon,
 Swoln by that voice—whose murmur musical
 Announces to the thirsty fields a boon
 Dewy and fresh, till showers again shall fail.

XX.

THE PLAIN OF DONNERDALE.

THE old inventive Poets, had they seen,
 Or rather felt, the entrancement that detains
 Thy waters, Duddon ! 'mid these flowery plains ;
 The still repose, the liquid lapse serene,
 Transferred to bowers imperishably green,
 Had beautified Elysium ! But these chains
 Will soon be broken ;—a rough course remains,
 Rough as the past ; where Thou, of placid mien,
 Innocuous as a firstling of the flock,
 And countenanced like a soft cerulean sky,
 Shalt change thy temper ; and, with many a shock
 Given and received in mutual jeopardy,
 Dance, like a Bacchanal, from rock to rock,
 Tossing her frantic thyrsus wide and high !

XXI.

WHENCE that low voice ?—A whisper from the heart,
 That told of days long past, when here I roved
 With friends and kindred tenderly beloved ;
 Some who had early mandates to depart,
 Yet are allowed to steal my path athwart
 By Duddon's side ; once more do we unite,
 Once more beneath the kind Earth's tranquil light ;
 And smothered joys into new being start.
 From her unworthy seat, the cloudy stall
 Of Time, breaks forth triumphant Memory ;
 Her glistening tresses bound, yet light and free
 As golden locks of birch, that rise and fall
 On gales that breathe too gently to recal
 Aught of the fading year's inclemency !

* See Humboldt's Personal Narrative.

† See Note.

‡ See Note.

XXII.

TRADITION.

A LOVE-LORN Maid, at some far-distant time,
 Came to this hidden pool, whose depths surpass
 In crystal clearness Dian's looking-glass ;
 And, gazing, saw that Rose, which from the prime
 Derives its name, reflected as the chime
 Of echo doth reverberate some sweet sound :
 The starry treasure from the blue profound
 She longed to ravish ;—shall she plunge, or climb
 The humid precipice, and seize the guest
 Of April, smiling high in upper air ?
 Desperate alternative ! what fiend could dare
 To prompt the thought ?—Upon the steep rock's
 breast
 The lonely Primrose yet renews its bloom,
 Untouched memento of her hapless doom !

XXIII.

SHEEP-WASHING.

SAD thoughts, avaunt !—partake we their blithe
 cheer
 Who gathered in betimes the unshorn flock
 To wash the fleece, where haply bands of rock,
 Checking the stream, make a pool smooth and clear
 As this we look on. Distant Mountains hear,
 Hear and repeat, the turmoil that unites
 Clamour of boys with innocent despites
 Of barking dogs, and bleatings from strange fear.
 And what if Duddon's spotless flood receive
 Unwelcome mixtures as the uncouth noise
 Thickens, the pastoral River will forgive
 Such wrong ; nor need *we* blame the licensed joys,
 Though false to Nature's quiet equipoise :
 Frank are the sports, the stains are fugitive.

XXIV.

THE RESTING-PLACE.

MID-NOON is past ;—upon the sultry mead
 No zephyr breathes, no cloud its shadow throws :
 If we advance unstrengthened by repose,
 Farewell the solace of the vagrant reed !
 This Nook—with woodbine hung and straggling
 Tempting recess as ever pilgrim chose, [weed,
 Half grot, half arbour—proffers to enclose
 Body and mind, from molestation freed,
 In narrow compass—narrow as itself :
 Or if the Fancy, too industrious Elf,
 Be loth that we should breathe awhile exempt
 From new incitements friendly to our task,
 Here wants not stealthy prospect, that may tempt
 Loose Idless to forego her wily mask.

XXV.

METHINKS 'twere no unprecedented feat
 Should some benignant Minister of air
 Lift, and encircle with a cloudy chair,
 The One for whom my heart shall ever beat
 With tenderest love ;—or, if a safer seat
 Atween his downy wings be furnished, there
 Would lodge her, and the cherished burden bear
 O'er hill and valley to this dim retreat !
 Rough ways my steps have trod ;—too rough and
 long
 For her companionship ; here dwells soft ease :
 With sweets that she partakes not some distaste
 Mingles, and lurking consciousness of wrong ;
 Languish the flowers ; the waters seem to waste
 Their vocal charm ; their sparklings cease to please.

XXVI.

RETURN, Content ! for fondly I pursued,
 Even when a child, the Streams—unheard, unseen
 Through tangled woods, impending rocks between
 Or, free as air, with flying inquest viewed
 The sullen reservoirs whence their bold brood—
 Pure as the morning, fretful, boisterous, keen,
 Green as the salt-sea billows, white and green—
 Poured down the hills, a choral multitude !
 Nor have I tracked their course for scanty gains ;
 They taught me random cares and truant joys,
 That shield from mischief and preserve from stain.
 Vague minds, while men are growing out of boys
 Maturer Fancy owes to their rough noise
 Impetuous thoughts that brook not servile reins.

XXVII.

FALLEN, and diffused into a shapeless heap,
 Or quietly self-buried in earth's mould,
 Is that embattled House, whose massy Keep
 Flung from you cliff a shadow large and cold.
 There dwelt the gay, the bountiful, the bold ;
 Till nightly lamentations, like the sweep
 Of winds—though winds were silent—struck a deed
 And lasting terror through that ancient Hold.
 Its line of Warriors fled ;—they shrunk when tried
 By ghostly power :—but Time's unsparing hand
 Hath plucked such foes, like weeds, from out the
 land ;
 And now, if men with men in peace abide,
 All other strength the weakest may withstand,
 All worse assaults may safely be defied.

XXVIII.

JOURNEY RENEWED.

ROSE while yet the cattle, heat-opprest,
 crowded together under rustling trees
 brushed by the current of the water-breeze ;
 and for *their* sakes, and love of all that rest,
 on Duddon's margin, in the sheltering nest ;
 for all the startled scaly tribes that slink
 into his coverts, and each fearless link
 of dancing insects forged upon his breast ;
 for these, and hopes and recollections worn
 close to the vital seat of human clay ;
 glad meetings, tender partings, that upstay
 the drooping mind of absence, by vows sworn
 in his pure presence near the trysting thorn—
 thanked the Leader of my onward way.

XXIX.

no record tells of lance opposed to lance,
 of horse charging horse, 'mid these retired domains ;
 tells that their turf drank purple from the veins
 of heroes, fallen, or struggling to advance,
 in doubtful combat issued in a trance
 of victory, that struck through heart and reins
 even to the inmost seat of mortal pains,
 and lightened o'er the pallid countenance.
 Yet, to the loyal and the brave, who lie
 on the blank earth, neglected and forlorn,
 the passing Winds memorial tribute pay ;
 the Torrents chant their praise, inspiring scorn
 of power usurped ; with proclamation high,
 and glad acknowledgment, of lawful sway.

XXX.

Who swerves from innocence, who makes divorce
 of that serene companion—a good name,
 recovers not his loss ; but walks with shame,
 with doubt, with fear, and haply with remorse :
 and oft-times he—who, yielding to the force
 of chance-temptation, ere his journey end,
 from chosen comrade turns, or faithful friend—
 vain shall rue the broken intercourse.
 Not so with such as loosely wear the chain
 that binds them, pleasant River ! to thy side :—
 through the rough copse wheel thou with hasty
 stride ;
 choose to saunter o'er the grassy plain,
 ere, when the separation has been tried,
 that we, who part in love, shall meet again.

XXXI.

THE KIRK of ULPHA to the pilgrim's eye
 Is welcome as a star, that doth present
 Its shining forehead through the peaceful rent
 Of a black cloud diffused o'er half the sky :
 Or as a fruitful palm-tree towering high
 O'er the parched waste beside an Arab's tent ;
 Or the Indian tree whose branches, downward bent,
 Take root again, a boundless canopy.
 How sweet were leisure ! could it yield no more
 Than 'mid that wave-washed Church-yard to recline,
 From pastoral graves extracting thoughts divine ;
 Or there to pace, and mark the summits hoar
 Of distant moon-lit mountains faintly shine,
 Soothed by the unseen River's gentle roar.

XXXII.

Nor hurled precipitous from steep to steep ;
 Lingering no more 'mid flower-enamelled lands
 And blooming thickets ; nor by rocky bands
 Held ; but in radiant progress toward the Deep
 Where mightiest rivers into powerless sleep
 Sink, and forget their nature—*now* expands
 Majestic Duddon, over smooth flat sands
 Gliding in silence with unfettered sweep !
 Beneath an ampler sky a region wide
 Is opened round him :—hamlets, towers, and towns,
 And blue-topped hills, behold him from afar ;
 In stately mien to sovereign Thames allied
 Spreading his bosom under Kentish downs,
 With commerce freighted, or triumphant war.

XXXIII.

CONCLUSION.

BUT here no cannon thunders to the gale ;
 Upon the wave no haughty pendants cast
 A crimson splendour : lowly is the mast
 That rises here, and humbly spread, the sail ;
 While, less disturbed than in the narrow Vale
 Through which with strange vicissitudes he passed,
 The Wanderer seeks that receptacle vast
 Where all his unambitious functions fail.
 And may thy Poet, cloud-born Stream ! be free—
 The sweets of earth contentedly resigned,
 And each tumultuous working left behind
 At seemly distance—to advance like Thee ;
 Prepared, in peace of heart, in calm of mind
 And soul, to mingle with Eternity !

XXXIV.

AFTER-THOUGHT.

*I THOUGHT of Thee, my partner and my guide,
As being past away.—Vain sympathies!
For, backward, Duddon! as I cast my eyes,
I see what was, and is, and will abide;
Still glides the Stream, and shall for ever glide;
The Form remains, the Function never dies;*

*While we, the brave, the mighty, and the wise,
We Men, who in our morn of youth defied
The elements, must vanish;—be it so!
Enough, if something from our hands have power
To live, and act, and serve the future hour;
And if, as toward the silent tomb we go,
Through love, through hope, and faith's transcendent
dower,
We feel that we are greater than we know.*

THE WHITE DOE OF RYLSTONE;

OR,

THE FATE OF THE NORTONS.

ADVERTISEMENT.

DURING the Summer of 1807, I visited, for the first time, the beautiful country that surrounds Bolton Priory, in Yorkshire; and the Poem of the WHITE DOE, founded upon a Tradition connected with that place, was composed at the close of the same year.

DEDICATION.

In trellised shed with clustering roses gay,
And, MARY! oft beside our blazing fire,
When years of wedded life were as a day
Whose current answers to the heart's desire,
Did we together read in Spenser's Lay
How Una, sad of soul—in sad attire,
The gentle Una, of celestial birth,
To seek her Knight went wandering o'er the earth.

Ah, then, Belovèd! pleasing was the smart,
And the tear precious in compassion shed
For Her, who, pierced by sorrow's thrilling dart,
Did meekly bear the pang unmerited;
Meek as that emblem of her lowly heart
The milk-white Lamb which in a line she led,—
And faithful, loyal in her innocence,
Like the brave Lion slain in her defence.

Notes could we hear as of a faery shell
Attuned to words with sacred wisdom fraught;
Free Fancy prized each specious miracle,
And all its finer inspiration caught;
Till in the bosom of our rustic Cell,
We by a lamentable change were taught
That 'bliss with mortal Man may not abide:'
How nearly joy and sorrow are allied!

For us the stream of fiction ceased to flow,
For us the voice of melody was mute.
—But, as soft gales dissolve the dreary snow,
And give the timid herbage leave to shoot,

Heaven's breathing influence failed not to bestow
A timely promise of unlooked-for fruit,
Fair fruit of pleasure and serene content
From blossoms wild of fancies innocent.

It soothed us—it beguiled us—then, to hear
Once more of troubles wrought by magic spell;
And griefs whose airy motion comes not near
The pangs that tempt the Spirit to rebel:
Then, with mild Una in her sober cheer,
High over hill and low adown the dell
Again we wandered, willing to partake
All that she suffered for her dear Lord's sake.

Then, too, this Song of mine once more could please,
Where anguish, strange as dreams of restless sleep,
Is tempered and allayed by sympathies
Aloft ascending, and descending deep,
Even to the inferior Kinds; whom forest-trees
Protect from beating sunbeams, and the sweep
Of the sharp winds;—fair Creatures!—to whom Heaven
A calm and sinless life, with love, hath given.

This tragic Story cheered us; for it speaks
Of female patience winning firm repose;
And, of the recompense that conscience seeks,
A bright, encouraging, example shows;
Needful when o'er wide realms the tempest breaks,
Needful amid life's ordinary woes;—
Hence, not for them unfitted who would bless
A happy hour with holier happiness.

He serves the Muses erringly and ill,
Whose aim is pleasure light and fugitive:
That my mind were equal to fulfil
The comprehensive mandate which they give—

RYDAL MOUNT, WESTMORELAND,
April 20, 1815.

'Action is transitory—a step, a blow,
The motion of a muscle—this way or that—
'Tis done; and in the after-vacancy
We wonder at ourselves like men betrayed:
Suffering is permanent, obscure and dark,
And has the nature of infinity.
Yet through that darkness (infinite though it seem

Vain aspiration of an earnest will!
Yet in this moral Strain a power may live,
Belovèd Wife! such solace to impart
As it hath yielded to thy tender heart.

And irremovable) gracious openings lie,
By which the soul—with patient steps of thought
Now toiling, wafted now on wings of prayer—
May pass in hope, and, though from mortal bonds
Yet undelivered, rise with sure ascent
Even to the fountain-head of peace divine.'

'They that deny a God, destroy Man's nobility: for certainly Man is of kinn to the Beast by his Body; and if he be not of kinn to God by his Spirit, he is a base ignoble Creature. It destroys likewise Magnanimity, and the raising of humane Nature: for take an example of a Dogg, and mark what a generosity and courage he will put on, when he finds himself maintained by a Man, who to him is instead of a God, or Melior Natura. Which courage is manifestly such, as that Creature without that confidence of a better Nature than his own could never attain. So Man, when he resteth and assureth himself upon Divine protection and favour, gathereth a force and faith which human Nature in itself could not obtain.'

LORD BACON.

CANTO FIRST.

FROM Bolton's old monastic tower
The bells ring loud with gladsome power;
The sun shines bright; the fields are gay
With people in their best array
Of stole and doublet, hood and scarf,
Along the banks of crystal Wharf,
Through the Vale retired and lowly,
Trooping to that summons holy.
And, up among the moorlands, see
What sprinklings of blithe company!
Of lasses and of shepherd grooms,
That down the steep hills force their way,
Like cattle through the budded brooms;
Path, or no path, what care they?
And thus in joyous mood they hie
To Bolton's mouldering Priory.

What would they there?—Full fifty years
That sumptuous Pile, with all its' peers,
Too harshly hath been doomed to taste
The bitterness of wrong and waste:
Its courts are ravaged; but the tower
Is standing with a voice of power,

That ancient voice which wont to call
To mass or some high festival;
And in the shattered fabric's heart
Remaineth one protected part;
A Chapel, like a wild-bird's nest,
Closely embowered and trimly drest;
And thither young and old repair,
This Sabbath-day, for praise and prayer.

Fast the church-yard fills;—anon
Look again, and they all are gone;
The cluster round the porch, and the folk
Who sate in the shade of the Prior's Oak!
And scarcely have they disappeared
Ere the prelusive hymn is heard:—
With one consent the people rejoice,
Filling the church with a lofty voice!
They sing a service which they feel:
For 'tis the sunrise now of zeal;
Of a pure faith the vernal prime—
In great Eliza's golden time.

A moment ends the fervent din,
And all is hushed, without and within;
For though the priest, more tranquilly,
Recites the holy liturgy,
The only voice which you can hear
Is the river murmuring near.
—When soft!—the dusky trees between,
And down the path through the open green,
Where is no living thing to be seen;
And through yon gateway, where is found,
Beneath the arch with ivy bound,
Free entrance to the church-yard ground—
Comes gliding in with lovely gleam,
Comes gliding in serene and slow,
Soft and silent as a dream,
A solitary Doe!

White she is as lily of June,
 And beauteous as the silver moon
 When out of sight the clouds are driven
 And she is left alone in heaven ;
 Or like a ship some gentle day
 In sunshine sailing far away,
 A glittering ship, that hath the plain
 Of ocean for her own domain.

Lie silent in your graves, ye dead !
 Lie quiet in your church-yard bed !
 Ye living, tend your holy cares ;
 Ye multitude, pursue your prayers ;
 And blame not me if my heart and sight
 Are occupied with one delight !
 'Tis a work for sabbath hours
 If I with this bright Creature go :
 Whether she be of forest bowers,
 From the bowers of earth below ;
 Or a Spirit for one day given,
 A pledge of grace from purest heaven.

What harmonious pensive changes
 Wait upon her as she ranges
 Round and through this Pile of state
 Overthrown and desolate !
 Now a step or two her way
 Leads through space of open day,
 Where the enamoured sunny light
 Brightens her that was so bright ;
 Now doth a delicate shadow fall,
 Falls upon her like a breath,
 From some lofty arch or wall,
 As she passes underneath :
 Now some gloomy nook partakes
 Of the glory that she makes,—
 High-ribbed vault of stone, or cell,
 With perfect cunning framed as well
 Of stone, and ivy, and the spread
 Of the elder's bushy head ;
 Some jealous and forbidding cell,
 That doth the living stars repel,
 And where no flower hath leave to dwell.

The presence of this wandering Doe
 Fills many a damp obscure recess
 With lustre of a saintly show ;
 And, reappearing, she no less
 Sheds on the flowers that round her blow
 A more than sunny liveliness.
 But say, among these holy places,
 Which thus assiduously she paces,
 Comes she with a votary's task,
 Rite to perform, or boon to ask ?

Fair Pilgrim ! harbours she a sense
 Of sorrow, or of reverence ?
 Can she be grieved for quire or shrine,
 Crushed as if by wrath divine ?
 For what survives of house where God
 Was worshipped, or where Man abode ;
 For old magnificence undone ;
 Or for the gentler work begun
 By Nature, softening and concealing,
 And busy with a hand of healing ?
 Mourns she for lordly chamber's hearth
 That to the sapling ash gives birth ;
 For dormitory's length laid bare
 Where the wild rose blossoms fair ;
 Or altar, whence the cross was rent,
 Now rich with mossy ornament ?
 —She sees a warrior carved in stone,
 Among the thick weeds, stretched alone ;
 A warrior, with his shield of pride
 Cleaving humbly to his side,
 And hands in resignation prest,
 Palm to palm, on his tranquil breast ;
 As little she regards the sight
 As a common creature might :
 If she be doomed to inward care,
 Or service, it must lie elsewhere.
 —But hers are eyes serenely bright,
 And on she moves—with pace how light !
 Nor spares to stoop her head, and taste
 The dewy turf with flowers bestrown ;
 And thus she fares, until at last
 Beside the ridge of a grassy grave
 In quietness she lays her down ;
 Gentle as a weary wave
 Sinks, when the summer breeze hath died,
 Against an anchored vessel's side ;
 Even so, without distress, doth she
 Lie down in peace, and lovingly.

The day is placid in its going,
 To a lingering motion bound,
 Like the crystal stream now flowing
 With its softest summer sound :
 So the balmy minutes pass,
 While this radiant Creature lies
 Couched upon the dewy grass,
 Pensively with downcast eyes.
 —But now again the people raise
 With awful cheer a voice of praise ;
 It is the last, the parting song ;
 And from the temple forth they throng,
 And quickly spread themselves abroad,
 While each pursues his several road.
 But some—a variegated band

Of middle-aged, and old, and young,
 And little children by the hand
 Upon their leading mothers hung—
 With mute obeisance gladly paid
 Turn towards the spot, where, full in view,
 The white Doe, to her service true,
 Her sabbath couch has made.

It was a solitary mound;
 Which two spears' length of level ground
 Did from all other graves divide:
 As if in some respect of pride;
 Or melancholy's sickly mood,
 Still shy of human neighbourhood;
 Or guilt, that humbly would express
 A penitential loneliness.

"Look, there she is, my Child! draw near;
 She fears not, wherefore should we fear?
 She means no harm;"—but still the Boy,
 To whom the words were softly said,
 Hung back, and smiled, and blushed for joy,
 A shame-faced blush of glowing red!
 Again the Mother whispered low,
 "Now you have seen the famous Doe;
 From Rylstone she hath found her way
 Over the hills this sabbath day;
 Her work, whate'er it be, is done,
 And she will depart when we are gone;
 Thus doth she keep, from year to year,
 Her sabbath morning, foul or fair."

Bright was the Creature, as in dreams
 The Boy had seen her, yea, more bright;
 But is she truly what she seems?
 He asks with insecure delight,
 Asks of himself, and doubts,—and still
 The doubt returns against his will:
 Though he, and all the standers-by,
 Could tell a tragic history
 Of facts divulged, wherein appear
 Substantial motive, reason clear,
 Why thus the milk-white Doe is found
 Couchant beside that lonely mound;
 And why she duly loves to pace
 The circuit of this hallowed place.
 Nor to the Child's inquiring mind
 Is such perplexity confined:
 For, spite of sober Truth that sees
 A world of fixed remembrances
 Which to this mystery belong,
 If, undeceived, my skill can trace
 The characters of every face,

There lack not strange delusion here,
 Conjecture vague, and idle fear,
 And superstitious fancies strong,
 Which do the gentle Creature wrong.

That bearded, staff-supported Sire—
 Who in his boyhood often fed
 Full cheerily on convent-bread
 And heard old tales by the convent-fire,
 And to his grave will go with scars,
 Relics of long and distant wars—
 That Old Man, studious to expound
 The spectacle, is mounting high
 To days of dim antiquity;
 When Lady Aäliza mourned
 Her Son, and felt in her despair
 The pang of unavailing prayer;
 Her Son in Wharf's abysses drowned,
 The noble Boy of Egremound.
 From which affliction—when the grace
 Of God had in her heart found place—
 A pious structure, fair to see,
 Rose up, this stately Priory!
 The Lady's work;—but now laid low;
 To the grief of her soul that doth come and go,
 In the beautiful form of this innocent Doe:
 Which, though seemingly doomed in its breast to
 sustain

A softened remembrance of sorrow and pain,
 Is spotless, and holy, and gentle, and bright;
 And glides o'er the earth like an angel of light.

Pass, pass who will, yon chantry door;
 And, through the chink in the fractured floor
 Look down, and see a griesly sight;
 A vault where the bodies are buried upright!
 There, face by face, and hand by hand,
 The Claphams and Mauleverers stand;
 And, in his place, among son and sire,
 Is John de Clapham, that fierce Esquire,
 A valiant man, and a name of dread
 In the ruthless wars of the White and Red;
 Who dragged Earl Pembroke from Banbury church
 And smote off his head on the stones of the porch!
 Look down among them, if you dare;
 Oft does the White Doe loiter there,
 Prying into the darksome rent;
 Nor can it be with good intent:
 So thinks that Dame of haughty air,
 Who hath a Page her book to hold,
 And wears a frontlet edged with gold.
 Harsh thoughts with her high mood agree—
 Who counts among her ancestry
 Earl Pembroke, slain so impiously!

That slender Youth, a scholar pale,
 From Oxford come to his native vale,
 He also hath his own conceit :
 It is, thinks he, the gracious Fairy,
 Who loved the Shepherd-lord to meet
 In his wanderings solitary :
 Wild notes she in his hearing sang,
 A song of Nature's hidden powers ;
 That whistled like the wind, and rang
 Among the rocks and holly bowers.
 'Twas said that She all shapes could wear ;
 And oftentimes before him stood,
 Amid the trees of some thick wood,
 In semblance of a lady fair ;
 And taught him signs, and showed him sights,
 In Craven's dens, on Cumbrian heights ;
 When under cloud of fear he lay,
 A shepherd clad in homely grey ;
 Nor left him at his later day.
 And hence, when he, with spear and shield,
 Rode full of years to Flodden-field,
 His eye could see the hidden spring,
 And how the current was to flow ;
 The fatal end of Scotland's King,
 And all that hopeless overthrow.
 But not in wars did he delight,
This Clifford wished for worthier might ;
 Nor in broad pomp, or courtly state ;
 Him his own thoughts did elevate,—
 Most happy in the shy recess
 Of Barden's lowly quietness.
 And choice of studious friends had he
 Of Bolton's dear fraternity ;
 Who, standing on this old church tower,
 In many a calm propitious hour,
 Perused, with him, the starry sky ;
 Or, in their cells, with him did pry
 For other lore,—by keen desire
 Urged to close toil with chemic fire ;
 In quest belike of transmutations
 Rich as the mine's most bright creations.
 But they and their good works are fled,
 And all is now disquieted—
 And peace is none, for living or dead !

Ah, pensive Scholar, think not so,
 But look again at the radiant Doe !
 What quiet watch she seems to keep,
 Alone, beside that grassy heap !
 Why mention other thoughts unmeet
 For vision so composed and sweet ?
 While stand the people in a ring,
 Gazing, doubting, questioning ;
 Yea, many overcome in spite

Of recollections clear and bright ;
 Which yet do unto some impart
 An undisturbed repose of heart.
 And all the assembly own a law
 Of orderly respect and awe ;
 But see—they vanish one by one,
 And last, the Doe herself is gone.

Harp ! we have been full long beguiled
 By vague thoughts, lured by fancies wild ;
 To which, with no reluctant strings,
 Thou hast attuned thy murmurings ;
 And now before this Pile we stand
 In solitude, and utter peace :
 But, Harp ! thy murmurs may not cease—
 A Spirit, with his angelic wings,
 In soft and breeze-like visitings,
 Has touched thee—and a Spirit's hand :
 A voice is with us—a command
 To chant, in strains of heavenly glory,
 A tale of tears, a mortal story !

CANTO SECOND.

THE Harp in lowliness obeyed ;
 And first we sang of the green-wood shade
 And a solitary Maid ;
 Beginning, where the song must end,
 With her, and with her sylvan Friend ;
 The Friend who stood before her sight,
 Her only unextinguished light ;
 Her last companion in a dearth
 Of love, upon a hopeless earth.

For She it was—this Maid, who wrought
 Meekly, with foreboding thought,
 In vermeil colours and in gold
 An unblest work ; which, standing by,
 Her Father did with joy behold,—
 Exulting in its imagery ;
 A Banner, fashioned to fulfil
 Too perfectly his headstrong will :
 For on this Banner had her hand
 Embroidered (such her Sire's command)
 The sacred Cross ; and figured there
 The five dear wounds our Lord did bear ;
 Full soon to be uplifted high,
 And float in rueful company !

It was the time when England's Queen
 Twelve years had reigned, a Sovereign dread ;
 Nor yet the restless crown had been
 Disturbed upon her virgin head ;

ut now the inly-working North
 as ripe to send its thousands forth,
 potent vassalage, to fight
 Percy's and in Neville's right,
 wo Earls fast leagued in discontent,
 who gave their wishes open vent ;
 and boldly urged a general plea,
 the rites of ancient piety
 to be triumphantly restored,
 by the stern justice of the sword !
 and that same Banner, on whose breast
 the blameless Lady had exprest
 memorials chosen to give life
 and sunshine to a dangerous strife ;
 that Banner, waiting for the Call,
 stood quietly in Rylstone-hall.

It came ; and Francis Norton said,
 O Father ! rise not in this fray—
 thy hairs are white upon your head ;
 dear Father, hear me when I say
 it is for you too late a day !
 I think you of your own good name :
 just and gracious Queen have we,
 pure religion, and the claim
 of peace on our humanity.—
 It is meet that I endure your scorn ;
 I am your son, your eldest born ;
 but not for lordship or for land,
 O Father, do I clasp your knees ;
 the Banner touch not, stay your hand,
 his multitude of men disband,
 and live at home in blameless ease ;
 for these my brethren's sake, for me ;
 and, most of all, for Emily ! ”

Tumultuous noises filled the hall ;
 and scarcely could the Father hear
 that name—pronounced with a dying fall—
 the name of his only Daughter dear,
 as on the banner which stood near
 he glanced a look of holy pride,
 and his moist eyes were glorified ;
 when did he seize the staff, and say :
 Thou, Richard, bear'st thy father's name,
 keep thou this ensign till the day
 when I of thee require the same :
 thy place be on my better hand ;—
 and seven as true as thou, I see,
 will cleave to this good cause and me.”
 He spake, and eight brave sons straightway
 all followed him, a gallant band !

Thus, with his sons, when forth he came
 the sight was hailed with loud acclaim

And din of arms and minstrelsy,
 From all his warlike tenantry,
 All horsed and harnessed with him to ride,—
 A voice to which the hills replied !

But Francis, in the vacant hall,
 Stood silent under dreary weight,—
 A phantasm, in which roof and wall
 Shook, tottered, swam before his sight ;
 A phantasm like a dream of night !
 Thus overwhelmed, and desolate,
 He found his way to a postern-gate ;
 And, when he waked, his languid eye
 Was on the calm and silent sky ;
 With air about him breathing sweet,
 And earth's green grass beneath his feet ;
 Nor did he fail ere long to hear
 A sound of military cheer,
 Faint—but it reached that sheltered spot ;
 He heard, and it disturbed him not.

There stood he, leaning on a lance
 Which he had grasped unknowingly,
 Had blindly grasped in that strong trance,
 That dimness of heart-agony ;
 There stood he, cleansed from the despair
 And sorrow of his fruitless prayer.
 The past he calmly hath reviewed :
 But where will be the fortitude
 Of this brave man, when he shall see
 That Form beneath the spreading tree,
 And know that it is Emily !

He saw her where in open view
 She sat beneath the spreading yew—
 Her head upon her lap, concealing
 In solitude her bitter feeling :
 “ Might ever son *command* a sire,
 The act were justified to-day.”
 This to himself—and to the Maid,
 Whom now he had approached, he said—
 “ Gone are they,—they have their desire ;
 And I with thee one hour will stay,
 To give thee comfort if I may.”

She heard, but looked not up, nor spake ;
 And sorrow moved him to partake
 Her silence ; then his thoughts turned round,
 And fervent words a passage found.

“ Gone are they, bravely, though misled ;
 With a dear Father at their head !
 The Sons obey a natural lord ;
 The Father had given solemn word

To noble Percy ; and a force
 Still stronger, bends him to his course.
 This said, our tears to-day may fall
 As at an innocent funeral.
 In deep and awful channel runs
 This sympathy of Sire and Sons ;
 Untried our Brothers have been loved
 With heart by simple nature moved ;
 And now their faithfulness is proved :
 For faithful we must call them, bearing
 That soul of conscientious daring.
 —There were they all in circle—there
 Stood Richard, Ambrose, Christopher,
 John with a sword that will not fail,
 And Marmaduke in fearless mail,
 And those bright Twins were side by side ;
 And there, by fresh hopes beautified,
 Stood He, whose arm yet lacks the power
 Of man, our youngest, fairest flower !
 I, by the right of eldest born,
 And in a second father's place,
 Presumed to grapple with their scorn,
 And meet their pity face to face ;
 Yea, trusting in God's holy aid,
 I to my Father knelt and prayed ;
 And one, the pensive Marmaduke,
 Methought, was yielding inwardly,
 And would have laid his purpose by,
 But for a glance of his Father's eye,
 Which I myself could scarcely brook.

Then be we, each and all, forgiven !
 Thou, chiefly thou, my Sister dear,
 Whose pangs are registered in heaven—
 The stifled sigh, the hidden tear,
 And smiles, that dared to take their place,
 Meek filial smiles, upon thy face,
 As that unhallowed Banner grew
 Beneath a loving old Man's view.
 Thy part is done—thy painful part ;
 Be thou then satisfied in heart !
 A further, though far easier, task
 Than thine hath been, my duties ask ;
 With theirs my efforts cannot blend,
 I cannot for such cause contend ;
 Their aims I utterly forswear ;
 But I in body will be there.
 Unarmed and naked will I go,
 Be at their side, come weal or woe :
 On kind occasions I may wait,
 See, hear, obstruct, or mitigate.
 Bare breast I take and an empty hand*.”—

Therewith he threw away the lance,
 Which he had grasped in that strong trance ;
 Spurned it, like something that would stand
 Between him and the pure intent
 Of love on which his soul was bent.

“ For thee, for thee, is left the sense
 Of trial past without offence
 To God or man ; such innocence,
 Such consolation, and the excess
 Of an unmerited distress ;
 In that thy very strength must lie.
 —O Sister, I could prophesy !
 The time is come that rings the knell
 Of all we loved, and loved so well :
 Hope nothing, if I thus may speak
 To thee, a woman, and thence weak :
 Hope nothing, I repeat ; for we
 Are doomed to perish utterly :
 'Tis meet that thou with me divide
 The thought while I am by thy side,
 Acknowledging a grace in this,
 A comfort in the dark abyss.
 But look not for me when I am gone,
 And be no farther wrought upon :
 Farewell all wishes, all debate,
 All prayers for this cause, or for that !
 Weep, if that aid thee ; but depend
 Upon no help of outward friend ;
 E spouse thy doom at once, and cleave
 To fortitude without reprieve.
 For we must fall, both we and ours—
 This Mansion and these pleasant bowers,
 Walks, pools, and arbours, homestead, hall—
 Our fate is theirs, will reach them all ;
 The young horse must forsake his manger,
 And learn to glory in a Stranger ;
 The hawk forget his perch ; the hound
 Be parted from his ancient ground :
 The blast will sweep us all away—
 One desolation, one decay !
 And even this Creature !” which words saying,
 He pointed to a lovely Doe,
 A few steps distant, feeding, straying ;
 Fair creature, and more white than snow !
 “ Even she will to her peaceful woods
 Return, and to her murmuring floods,
 And be in heart and soul the same
 She was before she hither came ;
 Ere she had learned to love us all,
 Herself beloved in Rylstone-hall.
 —But thou, my Sister, doomed to be
 The last leaf on a blasted tree ;
 If not in vain we breathed the breath

* See the Old Ballad,—“The Rising of the North.”

Together of a purer faith ;
 If hand in hand we have been led,
 And thou, (O happy thought this day!)
 Not seldom foremost in the way ;
 If on one thought our minds have fed,
 And we have in one meaning read ;
 If, when at home our private weal
 Hath suffered from the shock of zeal,
 Together we have learned to prize
 Forbearance and self-sacrifice ;
 If we like combatants have fared,
 And for this issue been prepared ;
 If thou art beautiful, and youth
 And thought endue thee with all truth—
 Be strong ;—be worthy of the grace
 Of God, and fill thy destined place :
 A Soul, by force of sorrows high,
 Uplifted to the purest sky
 Of undisturbed humanity !”

He ended,—or she heard no more ;
 He led her from the yew-tree shade,
 And at the mansion's silent door,
 He kissed the consecrated Maid ;
 And down the valley then pursued,
 Alone, the armèd Multitude.

CANTO THIRD.

Now joy for you who from the towers
 Of Brancepeth look in doubt and fear,
 Telling melancholy hours !
 Proclaim it, let your Masters hear
 That Norton with his hand is near !
 The watchmen from their station high
 Pronounced the word,—and the Earls descry,
 Well-pleased, the armèd Company
 Marching down the banks of Were.

Said fearless Norton to the pair
 Gone forth to greet him on the plain—
 “ This meeting, noble Lords ! looks fair,
 I bring with me a goodly train ;
 Their hearts are with you : hill and dale
 Have helped us : Ure we crossed, and Swale,
 And horse and harness followed—see
 The best part of their Yeomanry !
 —Stand forth, my Sons !—these eight are mine,
 Whom to this service I commend ;
 Which way soe'er our fate incline,
 These will be faithful to the end ;
 They are my all ”—voice failed him here—
 “ My all save one, a Daughter dear !

Whom I have left, Love's mildest birth,
 The meekest Child on this blessed earth.
 I had—but these are by my side,
 These Eight, and this is a day of pride !
 The time is ripe. With festive din
 Lo ! how the people are flocking in,—
 Like hungry fowl to the feeder's hand
 When snow lies heavy upon the land.”

He spake bare truth ; for far and near
 From every side came noisy swarms
 Of Peasants in their homely gear ;
 And, mixed with these, to Brancepeth came
 Grave Gentry of estate and name,
 And Captains known for worth in arms ;
 And prayed the Earls in self-defence
 To rise, and prove their innocence.—
 “ Rise, noble Earls, put forth your might
 For holy Church, and the People's right !”

The Norton fixed, at this demand,
 His eye upon Northumberland,
 And said ; “ The Minds of Men will own
 No loyal rest while England's Crown
 Remains without an Heir, the bait
 Of strife and factions desperate ;
 Who, paying deadly hate in kind
 Through all things else, in this can find
 A mutual hope, a common mind ;
 And plot, and pant to overwhelm
 All ancient honour in the realm.
 —Brave Earls ! to whose heroic veins
 Our noblest blood is given in trust,
 To you a suffering State complains,
 And ye must raise her from the dust.
 With wishes of still bolder scope
 On you we look, with dearest hope ;
 Even for our Altars—for the prize
 In Heaven, of life that never dies ;
 For the old and holy Church we mourn,
 And must in joy to her return.
 Behold ! ”—and from his Son whose stand
 Was on his right, from that guardian hand
 He took the Banner, and unfurled
 The precious folds—“ behold,” said he,
 “ The ransom of a sinful world ;
 Let this your preservation be ;
 The wounds of hands and feet and side,
 And the sacred Cross on which Jesus died
 —This bring I from an ancient hearth,
 These Records wrought in pledge of love
 By hands of no ignoble birth,
 A Maid o'er whom the blessed Dove
 Vouchsafed in gentleness to brood

While she the holy work pursued."
 "Uplift the Standard!" was the cry
 From all the listeners that stood round,
 "Plant it,—by this we live or die."
 The Norton ceased not for that sound,
 But said; "The prayer which ye have heard,
 Much injured Earls! by these preferred,
 Is offered to the Saints, the sigh
 Of tens of thousands, secretly."
 "Uplift it!" cried once more the Band,
 And then a thoughtful pause ensued:
 "Uplift it!" said Northumberland—
 Whereat, from all the multitude
 Who saw the Banner reared on high
 In all its dread emblazonry,
 A voice of uttermost joy brake out:
 The transport was rolled down the river of Were,
 And Durham, the time-honoured Durham, did
 hear,
 And the towers of Saint Cuthbert were stirred
 by the shout!

Now was the North in arms :—they shine
 In warlike trim from Tweed to Tyne,
 At Percy's voice : and Neville sees
 His Followers gathering in from Tees,
 From Were, and all the little rills
 Concealed among the forked hills—
 Seven hundred Knights, Retainers all
 Of Neville, at their Master's call
 Had sate together in Raby Hall!
 Such strength that Earldom held of yore;
 Nor wanted at this time rich store
 Of well-appointed chivalry.
 —Not loth the sleepy lance to wield,
 And greet the old paternal shield,
 They heard the summons;—and, furthermore,
 Horsemen and Foot of each degree,
 Unbound by pledge of fealty,
 Appeared, with free and open hate
 Of novelties in Church and State;
 Knight, burgher, yeoman, and esquire;
 And Romish priest, in priest's attire.
 And thus, in arms, a zealous Band
 Proceeding under joint command,
 To Durham first their course they bear;
 And in Saint Cuthbert's ancient seat
 Sang mass,—and tore the book of prayer,—
 And trod the bible beneath their feet.

Thence marching southward smooth and free
 'They mustered their host at Wetherby,
 Full sixteen thousand fair to see * ;'

* From the old ballad.

The Choicest Warriors of the North!
 But none for beauty and for worth
 Like those eight Sons—who, in a ring,
 (Ripe men, or blooming in life's spring)
 Each with a lance, erect and tall,
 A falchion, and a buckler small,
 Stood by their Sire, on Clifford-moor,
 To guard the Standard which he bore.
 On foot they girt their Father round;
 And so will keep the appointed ground
 Where'er their march: no steed will he
 Henceforth bestride;—triumphantly,
 He stands upon the grassy sod,
 Trusting himself to the earth, and God.
 Rare sight to embolden and inspire!
 Proud was the field of Sons and Sire;
 Of him the most; and, sooth to say,
 No shape of man in all the array
 So graced the sunshine of that day.
 The monumental pomp of age
 Was with this goodly Personage;
 A stature undepressed in size,
 Unbent, which rather seemed to rise,
 In open victory o'er the weight
 Of seventy years, to loftier height;
 Magnific limbs of withered state;
 A face to fear and venerate;
 Eyes dark and strong; and on his head
 Bright locks of silver hair, thick spread,
 Which a brown morion half-concealed,
 Light as a hunter's of the field;
 And thus, with girdle round his waist,
 Whereon the Banner-staff might rest
 At need, he stood, advancing high
 The glittering, floating Pageantry.

Who sees him?—thousands see, and One
 With unparticipated gaze;
 Who, 'mong those thousands, friend hath none,
 And treads in solitary ways.
 He, following 'wheresoe'er he might,
 Hath watched the Banner from afar,
 As shepherds watch a lonely star,
 Or mariners the distant light
 That guides them through a stormy night.
 And now, upon a chosen plot
 Of rising ground, yon heathy spot!
 He takes alone his far-off stand,
 With breast unmailed, unweaponed hand.
 Bold is his aspect; but his eye
 Is pregnant with anxiety,
 While, like a tutelary Power,
 He there stands fixed from hour to hour:
 Yet sometimes in more humble guise,

pon the turf-clad height he lies
 etched, herdsman-like, as if to bask
 sunshine were his only task,
 by his mantle's help to find
 shelter from the nipping wind :
 and thus, with short oblivion blest,
 his weary spirits gather rest.
 Again he lifts his eyes ; and lo !
 the pageant glancing to and fro ;
 and hope is awakened by the sight,
 whence he may learn, ere fall of night,
 which way the tide is doomed to flow.

To London were the Chieftains bent ;
 what avails the bold intent ?
 Royal army is gone forth
 to quell the RISING OF THE NORTH ;
 they march with Dudley at their head,
 and, in seven days' space, will to York be led !—
 In such a mighty Host be raised
 as suddenly, and brought so near ?
 The Earls upon each other gazed,
 and Neville's cheek grew pale with fear ;
 For, with a high and valiant name,
 he bore a heart of timid frame ;
 and bold if both had been, yet they
 against so many may not stay *.
 Check therefore will they hie to seize
 strong Hold on the banks of Tees ;
 ere wait a favourable hour,
 till Lord Dacre with his power
 from Naworth come ; and Howard's aid
 with them openly displayed.

While through the Host, from man to man,
 rumour of this purpose ran,
 the Standard trusting to the care
 of him who heretofore did bear
 at charge, impatient Norton sought
 the Chieftains to unfold his thought,
 and thus abruptly spake ;—" We yield
 and can it be ?) an unfought field !—
 how oft has strength, the strength of heaven,
 a few triumphantly been given !
 Will do our very children boast
 of mitred Thurston—what a Host
 he conquered !—Saw we not the Plain
 and flying shall behold again)
 here faith was proved ?—while to battle moved
 the Standard, on the Sacred Wain
 that bore it, compassed round by a bold
 fraternity of Barons old ;

And with those grey-haired champions stood,
 Under the saintly ensigns three,
 The infant Heir of Mowbray's blood—
 All confident of victory !—
 Shall Percy blush, then, for his name ?
 Must Westmoreland be asked with shame
 Whose were the numbers, where the loss,
 In that other day of Neville's Cross ?
 When the Prior of Durham with holy hand
 Raised, as the Vision gave command,
 Saint Cuthbert's Relic—far and near
 Kenned on the point of a lofty spear ;
 While the Monks prayed in Maiden's Bower
 To God descending in his power.
 Less would not at our need be due
 To us, who war against the Untrue ;—
 The delegates of Heaven we rise,
 Convoked the impious to chastise :
 We, we, the sanctities of old
 Would re-establish and uphold :
 Be warned"—His zeal the Chiefs confounded,
 But word was given, and the trumpet sounded :
 Back through the melancholy Host
 Went Norton, and resumed his post.
 Alas ! thought he, and have I borne
 This Banner raised with joyful pride,
 This hope of all posterity,
 By those dread symbols sanctified ;
 Thus to become at once the scorn
 Of babbling winds as they go by,
 A spot of shame to the sun's bright eye,
 To the light clouds a mockery !
 —" Even these poor eight of mine would stem—"
 Half to himself, and half to them
 He spake—" would stem, or quell, a force
 Ten times their number, man and horse ;
 This by their own unaided might,
 Without their father in their sight,
 Without the Cause for which they fight ;
 A Cause, which on a needful day
 Would breed us thousands brave as they."
 —So speaking, he his reverend head
 Raised towards that Imagery once more :
 But the familiar prospect shed
 Despondency unfelt before :
 A shock of intimations vain,
 Dismay, and superstitious pain,
 Fell on him, with the sudden thought
 Of her by whom the work was wrought :—
 Oh wherefore was her countenance bright
 With love divine and gentle light ?
 She would not, could not, disobey,
 But her Faith leaned another way.
 Ill tears she wept ; I saw them fall,

* From the old Ballad.

I overheard her as she spake
 Sad words to that mute Animal,
 The White Doe, in the hawthorn brake ;
 She steeped, but not for Jesu's sake,
 This Cross in tears : by her, and One
 Unworthier far we are undone—
 Her recreant Brother—he prevailed
 Over that tender Spirit—assailed
 Too oft alas ! by her whose head
 In the cold grave hath long been laid :
 She first, in reason's dawn beguiled
 Her docile, unsuspecting Child :
 Far back—far back my mind must go
 To reach the well-spring of this woe !

While thus he brooded, music sweet
 Of border tunes was played to cheer
 The footsteps of a quick retreat ;
 But Norton lingered in the rear,
 Stung with sharp thoughts ; and ere the last
 From his distracted brain was cast,
 Before his Father, Francis stood,
 And spake in firm and earnest mood.

"Though here I bend a suppliant knee
 In reverence, and unarmed, I bear
 In your indignant thoughts my share ;
 Am grieved this backward march to see
 So careless and disorderly.
 I scorn your Chiefs—men who would lead,
 And yet want courage at their need :
 Then look at them with open eyes !
 Deserve they further sacrifice ?—
 If—when they shrink, nor dare oppose
 In open field their gathering foes,
 (And fast, from this decisive day,
 Yon multitude must melt away :)
 If now I ask a grace not claimed
 While ground was left for hope ; unblamed
 Be an endeavour that can do
 No injury to them or you.
 My Father ! I would help to find
 A place of shelter, till the rage
 Of cruel men do like the wind
 Exhaust itself and sink to rest ;
 Be Brother now to Brother joined !
 Admit me in the equipage
 Of your misfortunes, that at least,
 Whatever fate remain behind,
 I may bear witness in my breast
 To your nobility of mind !"

"Thou Enemy, my bane and blight !
 Oh ! bold to fight the Coward's fight

Against all good"—but why declare,
 At length, the issue of a prayer
 Which love had prompted, yielding scope
 Too free to one bright moment's hope ?
 Suffice it that the Son, who strove
 With fruitless effort to allay
 That passion, prudently gave way ;
 Nor did he turn aside to prove
 His Brothers' wisdom or their love—
 But calmly from the spot withdrew ;
 His best endeavours to renew,
 Should e'er a kindlier time ensue.

CANTO FOURTH.

'Tis night : in silence looking down,
 The Moon, from cloudless ether, sees
 A Camp, and a beleaguered Town,
 And Castle like a stately crown
 On the steep rocks of winding Tees ;—
 And southward far, with moor between,
 Hill-top, and flood, and forest green,
 The bright Moon sees that valley small
 Where Rylstone's old sequestered Hall
 A venerable image yields
 Of quiet to the neighbouring fields ;
 While from one pillared chimney breathes
 The smoke, and mounts in silver wreaths.
 —The courts are hushed ;—for timely sleep
 The grey-hounds to their kennel creep ;
 The peacock in the broad ash tree
 Aloft is roosted for the night,
 He who in proud prosperity
 Of colours manifold and bright
 Walked round, affronting the daylight ;
 And higher still, above the bower
 Where he is perched, from yon lone Tower
 The hall-clock in the clear moonshine
 With glittering finger points at nine.

Ah ! who could think that sadness here
 Hath any sway ? or pain, or fear ?
 A soft and lulling sound is heard
 Of streams inaudible by day ;
 The garden pool's dark surface, stirred
 By the night insects in their play,
 Breaks into dimples small and bright ;
 A thousand, thousand rings of light
 That shape themselves and disappear
 Almost as soon as seen :—and lo !
 Not distant far, the milk-white Doe—
 The same who quietly was feeding
 On the green herb, and nothing heeding,

When Francis, uttering to the Maid
 His last words in the yew-tree shade,
 Involved whate'er by love was brought
 Out of his heart, or crossed his thought,
 Or chance presented to his eye,
 In one sad sweep of destiny—
 The same fair Creature, who hath found
 Her way into forbidden ground ;
 Where now—within this spacious plot
 For pleasure made, a goodly spot,
 With lawns and beds of flowers, and shades
 Of trellis-work in long arcades,
 And cirque and crescent framed by wall
 Of close-clipt foliage green and tall,
 Converging walks, and fountains gay,
 And terraces in trim array—
 Beneath yon cypress spiring high,
 With pine and cedar spreading wide
 Their darksome boughs on either side,
 In open moonlight doth she lie ;
 Happy as others of her kind,
 That, far from human neighbourhood,
 Range unrestricted as the wind,
 Through park, or chase, or savage wood.

But see the consecrated Maid
 Emerging from a cedar shade
 To open moonshine, where the Doe
 Beneath the cypress-spire is laid ;
 Like a patch of April snow—
 Upon a bed of herbage green,
 Lingered in a woody glade
 Or behind a rocky screen—
 Lonely relic ! which, if seen
 By the shepherd, is passed by
 With an inattentive eye.
 Nor more regard doth She bestow
 Upon the uncomplaining Doe
 Now couched at ease, though oft this day
 Not unperplexed nor free from pain,
 When she had tried, and tried in vain,
 Approaching in her gentle way,
 To win some look of love, or gain
 Encouragement to sport or play ;
 Attempts which still the heart-sick Maid
 Rejected, or with slight repaid.

Yet Emily is soothed ;—the breeze
 Came fraught with kindly sympathies.
 As she approached yon rustic Shed
 Hung with late-flowering woodbine, spread
 Along the walls and overhead,
 The fragrance of the breathing flowers
 Revived a memory of those hours

When here, in this remote alcove,
 (While from the pendent woodbine came
 Like odours, sweet as if the same)
 A fondly-anxious Mother strove
 To teach her salutary fears
 And mysteries above her years.
 Yes, she is soothed : an Image faint,
 And yet not faint—a presence bright
 Returns to her—that blessed Saint
 Who with mild looks and language mild
 Instructed here her darling Child,
 While yet a prattler on the knee,
 To worship in simplicity
 The invisible God, and take for guide
 The faith reformed and purified.

'Tis flown—the Vision, and the sense
 Of that beguiling influence ;
 “ But oh ! thou Angel from above,
 Mute Spirit of maternal love,
 That stood'st before my eyes, more clear
 Than ghosts are fabled to appear
 Sent upon embassies of fear ;
 As thou thy presence hast to me
 Vouchsafed, in radiant ministry
 Descend on Francis ; nor forbear
 To greet him with a voice, and say ;—
 ‘ If hope be a rejected stay,
 ‘ Do thou, my christian Son, beware
 ‘ Of that most lamentable snare,
 ‘ The self-reliance of despair ! ’ ”

Then from within the embowered retreat
 Where she had found a grateful seat
 Perturbed she issues. She will go !
 Herself will follow to the war,
 And clasp her Father's knees ;—ah, no !
 She meets the insuperable bar,
 The injunction by her Brother laid ;
 His parting charge—but ill obeyed—
 That interdicted all debate,
 All prayer for this cause or for that ;
 All efforts that would turn aside
 The headstrong current of their fate :
Her duty is to stand and wait ;
 In resignation to abide
 The shock, AND FINALLY SECURE
 O'ER PAIN AND GRIEF A TRIUMPH PURE.
 —She feels it, and her pangs are checked.
 But now, as silently she paced
 The turf, and thought by thought was chased,
 Came One who, with sedate respect,
 Approached, and, greeting her, thus spake ;
 “ An old man's privilege I take :

Dark is the time—a woeful day !
 Dear daughter of affliction, say
 How can I serve you ? point the way.”

“Rights have you, and may well be bold :
 You with my Father have grown old
 In friendship—strive—for his sake go—
 Turn from us all the coming woe :
 This would I beg ; but on my mind
 A passive stillness is enjoined.
 On you, if room for mortal aid
 Be left, is no restriction laid ;
 You not forbidden to recline
 With hope upon the Will divine.”

“Hope,” said the old Man, “must abide
 With all of us, whate’er betide.
 In Craven’s Wilds is many a den,
 To shelter persecuted men :
 Far under ground is many a cave,
 Where they might lie as in the grave,
 Until this storm hath ceased to rave :
 Or let them cross the River Tweed,
 And be at once from peril freed !”

“Ah tempt me not !” she faintly sighed ;
 “I will not counsel nor exhort,
 With my condition satisfied ;
 But you, at least, may make report
 Of what befalls ;—be this your task—
 This may be done ;—’tis all I ask !”

She spake—and from the Lady’s sight
 The Sire, unconscious of his age,
 Departed promptly as a Page
 Bound on some errand of delight.
 —The noble Francis—wise as brave,
 Thought he, may want not skill to save.
 With hopes in tenderness concealed,
 Unarmed he followed to the field ;
 Him will I seek : the insurgent Powers
 Are now besieging Barnard’s Towers,—
 “Grant that the Moon which shines this night
 May guide them in a prudent flight !”

But quick the turns of chance and change,
 And knowledge has a narrow range ;
 Whence idle fears, and needless pain,
 And wishes blind, and efforts vain.—
 The Moon may shine, but cannot be
 Their guide in flight—already she
 Hath witnessed their captivity.
 She saw the desperate assault
 Upon that hostile castle made ;—
 But dark and dismal is the vault

Where Norton and his sons are laid !
 Disastrous issue !—he had said
 “This night yon faithless Towers must yield,
 Or we for ever quit the field.
 —Neville is utterly dismayed,
 For promise fails of Howard’s aid ;
 And Dacre to our call replies
 That *he* is unprepared to rise.
 My heart is sick ;—this weary pause
 Must needs be fatal to our cause.
 The breach is open—on the wall,
 This night, the Banner shall be planted !”
 —’Twas done : his Sons were with him—all ;
 They belt him round with hearts undaunted
 And others follow ;—Sire and Son
 Leap down into the court ;—“’Tis won”—
 They shout aloud—but Heaven decreed
 That with their joyful shout should close
 The triumph of a desperate deed
 Which struck with terror friends and foes !
 The friend shrinks back—the foe recoils
 From Norton and his filial band ;
 But they, now caught within the toils,
 Against a thousand cannot stand ;—
 The foe from numbers courage drew,
 And overpowered that gallant few.
 “A rescue for the Standard !” cried
 The Father from within the walls ;
 But, see, the sacred Standard falls !—
 Confusion through the Camp spread wide :
 Some fled ; and some their fears detained :
 But ere the Moon had sunk to rest
 In her pale chambers of the west,
 Of that rash levy nought remained.

CANTO FIFTH.

HIGH on a point of rugged ground
 Among the wastes of Rylstone Fell
 Above the loftiest ridge or mound
 Where foresters or shepherds dwell,
 An edifice of warlike frame
 Stands single—Norton Tower its name—
 It fronts all quarters, and looks round
 O’er path and road, and plain and dell,
 Dark moor, and gleam of pool and stream
 Upon a prospect without bound.

The summit of this bold ascent—
 Though bleak and bare, and seldom free
 As Pendle-hill or Pennygent
 From wind, or frost, or vapours wet—
 Had often heard the sound of glee

When there the youthful Nortons met,
 To practise games and archery :
 How proud and happy they ! the crowd
 Of Lookers-on how pleased and proud !
 And from the scorching noon-tide sun,
 From showers, or when the prize was won,
 They to the Tower withdrew, and there
 Would mirth run round, with generous fare ;
 And the stern old Lord of Rylstone-hall,
 Was happiest, proudest, of them all !

But now, his Child, with anguish pale,
 Upon the height walks to and fro ;
 'Tis well that she hath heard the tale,
 Received the bitterness of woe :
 For she *had* hoped, had hoped and feared,
 Such rights did feeble nature claim ;
 And oft her steps had hither steered,
 Though not unconscious of self-blame ;
 For she her brother's charge revered,
 His farewell words ; and by the same,
 Yea by her brother's very name,
 Had, in her solitude, been cheered.

Beside the lonely watch-tower stood
 That grey-haired Man of gentle blood,
 Who with her Father had grown old
 In friendship ; rival hunters they,
 And fellow warriors in their day ;
 To Rylstone he the tidings brought ;
 Then on this height the Maid had sought,
 And, gently as he could, had told
 The end of that dire Tragedy,
 Which it had been his lot to see.

To him the Lady turned ; " You said
 That Francis lives, *he* is not dead ? "

" Your noble brother hath been spared ;
 To take his life they have not dared ;
 On him and on his high endeavour
 The light of praise shall shine for ever !
 Nor did he (such Heaven's will) in vain
 His solitary course maintain ;
 Not vainly struggled in the might
 Of duty, seeing with clear sight ;
 He was their comfort to the last,
 Their joy till every pang was past.

I witnessed when to York they came—
 What, Lady, if their feet were tied ;
 They might deserve a good Man's blame ;
 But marks of infamy and shame—
 These were their triumph, these their pride ;

Nor wanted 'mid the pressing crowd
 Deep feeling, that found utterance loud,
 ' Lo, Francis comes,' there were who cried,
 ' A Prisoner once, but now set free !
 'Tis well, for he the worst defied
 Through force of natural piety ;
 He rose not in this quarrel, he,
 For concord's sake and England's good,
 Suit to his Brothers often made
 With tears, and of his Father prayed—
 And when he had in vain withstood
 Their purpose—then did he divide,
 He parted from them ; but at their side
 Now walks in unanimity.
 Then peace to cruelty and scorn,
 While to the prison they are borne,
 Peace, peace to all indignity ! '

And so in Prison were they laid—
 Oh hear me, hear me, gentle Maid,
 For I am come with power to bless,
 By scattering gleams, through your distress,
 Of a redeeming happiness.
 Me did a reverent pity move
 And privilege of ancient love ;
 And, in your service, making bold,
 Entrance I gained to that strong-hold.

Your Father gave me cordial greeting ;
 But to his purposes, that burned
 Within him, instantly returned :
 He was commanding and entreating,
 And said—' We need not stop, my Son !
 Thoughts press, and time is hurrying on '—
 And so to Francis he renewed
 His words, more calmly thus pursued.

' Might this our enterprise have sped,
 Change wide and deep the Land had seen,
 A renovation from the dead,
 A spring-tide of immortal green :
 The darksome altars would have blazed
 Like stars when clouds are rolled away ;
 Salvation to all eyes that gazed,
 Once more the Rood had been upraised
 To spread its arms, and stand for aye.
 Then, then—had I survived to see
 New life in Bolton Priory ;
 The voice restored, the eye of Truth
 Re-opened that inspired my youth ;
 To see her in her pomp arrayed—
 This Banner (for such vow I made)
 Should on the consecrated breast
 Of that same Temple have found rest :

I would myself have hung it high,
Fit offering of glad victory !

A shadow of such thought remains
To cheer this sad and pensive time ;
A solemn fancy yet sustains
One feeble Being—bids me climb
Even to the last—one effort more
To attest my Faith, if not restore.

Hear then,' said he, ' while I impart,
My Son, the last wish of my heart.
The Banner strive thou to regain ;
And, if the endeavour prove not vain,
Bear it—to whom if not to thee
Shall I this lonely thought consign ?—
Bear it to Bolton Priory,
And lay it on Saint Mary's shrine ;
To wither in the sun and breeze
'Mid those decaying sanctities.
There let at least the gift be laid,
The testimony there displayed ;
Bold proof that with no selfish aim,
But for lost Faith and Christ's dear name,
I helmeted a brow though white,
And took a place in all men's sight ;
Yea offered up this noble Brood,
This fair unrivalled Brotherhood,
And turned away from thee, my Son !
And left—but be the rest unsaid,
The name untouched, the tear unshed ;—
My wish is known, and I have done :
Now promise, grant this one request,
This dying prayer, and be thou blest ! '

Then Francis answered—' Trust thy Son,
For, with God's will, it shall be done ! '—

The pledge obtained, the solemn word
Thus scarcely given, a noise was heard,
And Officers appeared in state
To lead the prisoners to their fate.
They rose, oh ! wherefore should I fear
To tell, or, Lady, you to hear ?
They rose—embraces none were given—
They stood like trees when earth and heaven
Are calm ; they knew each other's worth,
And reverently the Band went forth.
They met, when they had reached the door,
One with profane and harsh intent
Placed there—that he might go before
And, with that rueful Banner borne
Aloft in sign of taunting scorn,
Conduct them to their punishment :

So cruel Sussex, unrestrained
By human feeling, had ordained.
The unhappy Banner Francis saw,
And, with a look of calm command
Inspiring universal awe,
He took it from the soldier's hand ;
And all the people that stood round
Confirmed the deed in peace profound.
—High transport did the Father shed
Upon his Son—and they were led,
Led on, and yielded up their breath ;
Together died, a happy death !—
But Francis, soon as he had braved
That insult, and the Banner saved,
Athwart the unresisting tide
Of the spectators occupied
In admiration or dismay,
Bore instantly his Charge away."

These things, which thus had in the sight
And hearing passed of Him who stood
With Emily, on the Watch-tower height,
In Rylstone's woeful neighbourhood,
He told ; and oftentimes with voice
Of power to comfort or rejoice ;
For deepest sorrows that aspire,
Go high, no transport ever higher.
" Yes—God is rich in mercy," said
The old Man to the silent Maid,
" Yet, Lady ! shines, through this black night,
One star of aspect heavenly bright ;
Your Brother lives—he lives—is come
Perhaps already to his home ;
Then let us leave this dreary place."
She yielded, and with gentle pace,
Though without one uplifted look,
To Rylstone-hall her way she took.

CANTO SIXTH.

WHY comes not Francis?—From the doleful City
He fled,—and, in his flight, could hear
The death-sounds of the Minster-bell :
That sullen stroke pronounced farewell
To Marmaduke, cut off from pity !
To Ambrose that ! and then a knell
For him, the sweet half-opened Flower !
For all—all dying in one hour !
—Why comes not Francis ? Thoughts of love
Should bear him to his Sister dear
With the fleet motion of a dove ;
Yea, like a heavenly messenger
Of speediest wing, should he appear.

Why comes he not?—for westward fast
 Along the plain of York he past;
 Reckless of what impels or leads,
 Unchecked he hurries on;—nor heeds
 The sorrow, through the Villages,
 Spread by triumphant cruelties
 Of vengeful military force,
 And punishment without remorse.
 He marked not, heard not, as he fled;
 All but the suffering heart was dead
 For him abandoned to blank awe,
 To vacancy, and horror strong:
 And the first object which he saw,
 With conscious sight, as he swept along—
 It was the Banner in his hand!
 He felt—and made a sudden stand.

He looked about like one betrayed:
 What hath he done? what promise made?
 Oh weak, weak moment! to what end
 Can such a vain oblation tend,
 And he the Bearer?—Can he go
 Carrying this instrument of woe,
 And find, find any where, a right
 To excuse him in his Country's sight?
 No; will not all men deem the change
 A downward course, perverse and strange?
 Here is it;—but how? when? must she,
 The unoffending Emily,
 Again this piteous object see?

Such conflict long did he maintain,
 Nor liberty nor rest could gain:
 His own life into danger brought
 By this sad burden—even that thought,
 Exciting self-suspicion strong
 Swayed the brave man to his wrong.
 And how—unless it were the sense
 Of all-disposing Providence,
 Its will unquestionably shown—
 How has the Banner clung so fast
 To a palsied, and unconscious hand;
 Clung to the hand to which it passed
 Without impediment? And why
 But that Heaven's purpose might be known
 Doth now no hindrance meet his eye,
 No intervention, to withstand
 Fulfilment of a Father's prayer
 Breathed to a Son forgiven, and blest
 When all resentments were at rest,
 And life in death laid the heart bare?—
 Then, like a spectre sweeping by,
 Rushed through his mind the prophecy
 Of utter desolation made

To Emily in the yew-tree shade:
 He sighed, submitting will and power
 To the stern embrace of that grasping hour.
 "No choice is left, the deed is mine—
 Dead are they, dead!—and I will go,
 And, for their sakes, come weal or woe,
 Will lay the Relic on the shrine."

So forward with a steady will
 He went, and traversed plain and hill;
 And up the vale of Wharf his way
 Pursued;—and, at the dawn of day,
 Attained a summit whence his eyes
 Could see the Tower of Bolton rise.
 There Francis for a moment's space
 Made halt—but hark! a noise behind
 Of horsemen at an eager pace!
 He heard, and with misgiving mind.
 —'Tis Sir George Bowes who leads the Band:
 They come, by cruel Sussex sent;
 Who, when the Nortons from the hand
 Of death had drunk their punishment,
 Bethought him, angry and ashamed,
 How Francis, with the Banner claimed
 As his own charge, had disappeared,
 By all the standers-by revered.
 His whole bold carriage (which had quelled
 Thus far the Opposer, and repelled
 All censure, enterprise so bright
 That even bad men had vainly striven
 Against that overcoming light)
 Was then reviewed, and prompt word given,
 That to what place soever fled
 He should be seized, alive or dead.

The troop of horse have gained the height
 Where Francis stood in open sight.
 They hem him round—"Behold the proof,"
 They cried, "the Ensign in his hand!
He did not arm, he walked aloof!
 For why?—to save his Father's land;—
 Worst Traitor of them all is he,
 A Traitor dark and cowardly!"

"I am no Traitor," Francis said,
 "Though this unhappy freight I bear;
 And must not part with. But beware;—
 Err not, by hasty zeal misled,
 Nor do a suffering Spirit wrong,
 Whose self-reproaches are too strong!"
 At this he from the beaten road
 Retreated towards a brake of thorn,
 That like a place of vantage showed;
 And there stood bravely, though forlorn.

In self-defence with warlike brow
 He stood,—nor weaponless was now;
 He from a Soldier's hand had snatched
 A spear,—and, so protected, watched
 The Assailants, turning round and round;
 But from behind with treacherous wound
 A Spearman brought him to the ground.
 The guardian lance, as Francis fell,
 Dropped from him; but his other hand
 The Banner clenched; till, from out the Band,
 One, the most eager for the prize,
 Rushed in; and—while, O grief to tell!
 A glimmering sense still left, with eyes
 Unclosed the noble Francis lay—
 Seized it, as hunters seize their prey;
 But not before the warm life-blood
 Had tinged more deeply, as it flowed,
 The wounds the brodered Banner showed,
 Thy fatal work, O Maiden, innocent as good!

Proudly the Horsemen bore away
 The Standard; and where Francis lay
 There was he left alone, unwept,
 And for two days unnoticed slept.
 For at that time bewildering fear
 Possessed the country, far and near;
 But, on the third day, passing by
 One of the Norton Tenantry
 Espied the uncovered Corse; the Man
 Shrunk as he recognised the face,
 And to the nearest homesteads ran
 And called the people to the place.
 —How desolate is Rylstone-hall!
 This was the instant thought of all;
 And if the lonely Lady there
 Should be; to her they cannot bear
 This weight of anguish and despair.
 So, when upon sad thoughts had prest
 Thoughts sadder still, they deemed it best
 That, if the Priest should yield assent
 And no one hinder their intent,
 Then, they, for Christian pity's sake,
 In holy ground a grave would make;
 And straightway buried he should be
 In the Church-yard of the Priory.

Apart, some little space, was made
 The grave where Francis must be laid.
 In no confusion or neglect
 This did they,—but in pure respect
 That he was born of gentle blood;
 And that there was no neighbourhood
 Of kindred for him in that ground:
 So to the Church-yard they are bound,

Bearing the body on a bier;
 And psalms they sing—a holy sound
 That hill and vale with sadness hear.

But Emily hath raised her head,
 And is again disquieted;
 She must behold!—so many gone,
 Where is the solitary One?
 And forth from Rylstone-hall stepped she,—
 To seek her Brother forth she went,
 And tremblingly her course she bent
 Toward Bolton's ruined Priory.
 She comes, and in the vale hath heard
 The funeral dirge;—she sees the knot
 Of people, sees them in one spot—
 And darting like a wounded bird
 She reached the grave, and with her breast
 Upon the ground received the rest,—
 The consummation, the whole ruth
 And sorrow of this final truth!

CANTO SEVENTH.

‘Powers there are
 That touch each other to the quick—in modes
 Which the gross world no sense hath to perceive,
 No soul to dream of.’

Thou Spirit, whose angelic hand
 Was to the harp a strong command,
 Called the submissive strings to wake
 In glory for this Maiden's sake,
 Say, Spirit! whither hath she fled
 To hide her poor afflicted head?
 What mighty forest in its gloom
 Enfolds her?—is a rifted tomb
 Within the wilderness her seat?
 Some island which the wild waves beat—
 Is that the Sufferer's last retreat?
 Or some aspiring rock, that shrouds
 Its perilous front in mists and clouds?
 High-climbing rock, low sunless dale,
 Sea, desert, what do these avail?
 Oh take her anguish and her fears
 Into a deep recess of years!

'Tis done;—despoil and desolation
 O'er Rylstone's fair domain have blown;
 Pools, terraces, and walks are sown
 With weeds; the bowers are overthrown,
 Or have given way to slow mutation,
 While, in their ancient habitation
 The Norton name hath been unknown.
 The lordly Mansion of its pride

stripped; the ravage hath spread wide
 through park and field, a perishing
 that mocks the gladness of the Spring!
 And, with this silent gloom agreeing,
 appears a joyless human Being,
 of aspect such as if the waste
 were under her dominion placed.
 Upon a primrose bank, her throne
 of quietness, she sits alone;
 among the ruins of a wood,
 awhile a covert bright and green,
 and where full many a brave tree stood,
 that used to spread its boughs, and ring
 with the sweet bird's carolling.
 Behold her, like a virgin Queen,
 neglecting in imperial state
 these outward images of fate,
 and carrying inward a serene
 and perfect sway, through many a thought
 of chance and change, that hath been brought
 to the subjection of a holy,
 enough stern and rigorous, melancholy!
 She like authority, with grace
 of awfulness, is in her face,—
 where hath she fixed it; yet it seems
 to o'ershadow by no native right
 that face, which cannot lose the gleams,
 those utterly the tender gleams,
 of gentleness and meek delight,
 and loving-kindness ever bright:
 such is her sovereign mien:—her dress
 a vest with woollen cincture tied,
 hood of mountain-wool undyed)
 homely,—fashioned to express
 wandering Pilgrim's humbleness.

And she *hath* wandered, long and far,
 beneath the light of sun and star;
 hath roamed in trouble and in grief,
 driven forward like a withered leaf,
 sea like a ship at random blown
 to distant places and unknown.
 But now she dares to seek a haven
 among her native wilds of Craven;
 hath seen again her Father's roof,
 and put her fortitude to proof;
 the mighty sorrow hath been borne,
 and she is thoroughly forlorn:
 her soul doth in itself stand fast,
 sustained by memory of the past
 and strength of Reason; held above
 the infirmities of mortal love;
 undaunted, lofty, calm, and stable,
 and awfully impenetrable.

And so—beneath a mouldered tree,
 A self-surviving leafless oak
 By unregarded age from stroke
 Of ravage saved—sate Emily.
 There did she rest, with head reclined,
 Herself most like a stately flower,
 (Such have I seen) whom chance of birth
 Hath separated from its kind,
 To live and die in a shady bower,
 Single on the gladsome earth.

When, with a noise like distant thunder,
 A troop of deer came sweeping by;
 And, suddenly, behold a wonder!
 For One, among those rushing deer,
 A single One, in mid career
 Hath stopped, and fixed her large full eye
 Upon the Lady Emily;
 A Doe most beautiful, clear-white,
 A radiant creature, silver-bright!

Thus checked, a little while it stayed;
 A little thoughtful pause it made;
 And then advanced with stealth-like pace,
 Drew softly near her, and more near—
 Looked round—but saw no cause for fear;
 So to her feet the Creature came,
 And laid its head upon her knee,
 And looked into the Lady's face,
 A look of pure benignity,
 And fond unclouded memory.
 It is, thought Emily, the same,
 The very Doe of other years!—
 The pleading look the Lady viewed,
 And, by her gushing thoughts subdued,
 She melted into tears—
 A flood of tears, that flowed apace,
 Upon the happy Creature's face.

Oh, moment ever blest! O Pair
 Beloved of Heaven, Heaven's chosen care,
 This was for you a precious greeting;
 And may it prove a fruitful meeting!
 Joined are they, and the sylvan Doe
 Can she depart? can she forego
 The Lady, once her playful peer,
 And now her sainted Mistress dear?
 And will not Emily receive
 This lovely chronicler of things
 Long past, delights and sorrowings?
 Lone Sufferer! will not she believe
 The promise in that speaking face;
 And welcome, as a gift of grace,
 The saddest thought the Creature brings?

That day, the first of a re-union
Which was to teem with high communion,
That day of balmy April weather,
They tarried in the wood together.
And when, ere fall of evening dew,
She from her sylvan haunt withdrew,
The White Doe tracked with faithful pace
The Lady to her dwelling-place ;
That nook where, on paternal ground,
A habitation she had found,
The Master of whose humble board
Once owned her Father for his Lord ;
A hut, by tufted trees defended,
Where Rylstone brook with Wharf is blended.

When Emily by morning light
Went forth, the Doe stood there in sight.
She shrunk :—with one frail shock of pain
Received and followed by a prayer,
She saw the Creature once again ;
Shun will she not, she feels, will bear ;—
But, wheresoever she looked round,
All now was trouble-haunted ground ;
And therefore now she deems it good
Once more this restless neighbourhood
To leave.—Unwooded, yet unforbidden,
The White Doe followed up the vale,
Up to another cottage, hidden
In the deep fork of Amerdale ;
And there may Emily restore
Herself, in spots unseen before.
—Why tell of mossy rock, or tree,
By lurking Dernbrook's pathless side,
Haunts of a strengthening amity
That calmed her, cheered, and fortified ?
For she hath ventured now to read
Of time, and place, and thought, and deed—
Endless history that lies
In her silent Follower's eyes ;
Who with a power like human reason
Discerns the favourable season,
Skilled to approach or to retire,—
From looks conceiving her desire ;
From look, deportment, voice, or mien,
That vary to the heart within.
If she too passionately wreathed
Her arms, or over-deeply breathed,
Walked quick or slowly, every mood
In its degree was understood ;
Then well may their accord be true,
And kindest intercourse ensue.
—Oh ! surely 'twas a gentle rousing
When she by sudden glimpse espied
The White Doe on the mountain browsing,

Or in the meadow wandered wide !
How pleased, when down the Straggler sank
Beside her, on some sunny bank !
How soothed, when in thick bower enclosed,
They, like a nested pair, reposed !
Fair Vision ! when it crossed the Maid
Within some rocky cavern laid,
The dark cave's portal gliding by,
White as whitest cloud on high
Floating through the azure sky.
—What now is left for pain or fear ?
That Presence, dearer and more dear,
While they, side by side, were straying,
And the shepherd's pipe was playing,
Did now a very gladness yield
At morning to the dewy field,
And with a deeper peace endued
The hour of moonlight solitude.

With her Companion, in such frame
Of mind, to Rylstone back she came ;
And, ranging through the wasted groves,
Received the memory of old loves,
Undisturbed and undistrest,
Into a soul which now was blest
With a soft spring-day of holy,
Mild, and grateful, melancholy :
Not sunless gloom or unenlightened,
But by tender fancies brightened.

When the bells of Rylstone played
Their sabbath music—' *God us ayde !*'
That was the sound they seemed to speak ;
Inscriptive legend which I ween
May on those holy bells be seen,
That legend and her Grandsire's name ;
And oftentimes the Lady meek
Had in her childhood read the same ;
Words which she slighted at that day ;
But now, when such sad change was wrought,
And of that lonely name she thought,
The bells of Rylstone seemed to say,
While she sate listening in the shade,
With vocal music, ' *God us ayde ;*'
And all the hills were glad to bear
Their part in this effectual prayer.

Nor lacked she Reason's firmest power ;
But with the White Doe at her side
Up would she climb to Norton Tower,
And thence look round her far and wide,
Her fate there measuring ;—all is stilled,—
The weak One hath subdued her heart ;
Behold the prophecy fulfilled,

Fulfilled, and she sustains her part !
 But here her Brother's words have failed ;
 Here hath a milder doom prevailed ;
 That she, of him and all bereft,
 Hath yet this faithful Partner left ;
 This one Associate that disproves
 His words, remains for her, and loves.
 If tears are shed, they do not fall
 For loss of him—for one, or all ;
 Yet, sometimes, sometimes doth she weep
 Moved gently in her soul's soft sleep ;
 A few tears down her cheek descend
 For this her last and living Friend.

Bless, tender Hearts, their mutual lot,
 And bless for both this savage spot ;
 Which Emily doth sacred hold
 For reasons dear and manifold—
 Here hath she, here before her sight,
 Close to the summit of this height,
 The grassy rock-encircled Pound
 In which the Creature first was found.
 So beautiful the timid Thrall
 (A spotless Youngling white as foam)
 Her youngest Brother brought it home ;
 The youngest, then a lusty boy,
 Bore it, or led, to Rylstone-hall
 With heart brimful of pride and joy !

But most to Bolton's sacred Pile,
 On favouring nights, she loved to go ;
 There ranged through cloister, court, and aisle,
 Attended by the soft-paced Doe ;
 Nor feared she in the still moonshine
 To look upon Saint Mary's shrine ;
 Nor on the lonely turf that showed
 Where Francis slept in his last abode.
 For that she came ; there oft she sate
 Forlorn, but not disconsolate :
 And, when she from the abyss returned
 Of thought, she neither shrunk nor mourned ;
 Was happy that she lived to greet
 Her mute Companion as it lay
 In love and pity at her feet ;
 How happy in its turn to meet
 The recognition ! the mild glance
 Beamed from that gracious countenance ;
 Communication, like the ray
 Of a new morning, to the nature
 And prospects of the inferior Creature !

A mortal Song we sing, by dower
 Encouraged of celestial power ;

Power which the viewless Spirit shed
 By whom we were first visited ;
 Whose voice we heard, whose hand and wings
 Swept like a breeze the conscious strings,
 When, left in solitude, erewhile
 We stood before this ruined Pile,
 And, quitting unsubstantial dreams,
 Sang in this Presence kindred themes ;
 Distress and desolation spread
 Through human hearts, and pleasure dead,—
 Dead—but to live again on earth,
 A second and yet nobler birth ;
 Dire overthrow, and yet how high
 The re-ascent in sanctity !
 From fair to fairer ; day by day
 A more divine and loftier way !
 Even such this blessed Pilgrim trod,
 By sorrow lifted towards her God ;
 Uplifted to the purest sky
 Of undisturbed mortality.
 Her own thoughts loved she ; and could bend
 A dear look to her lowly Friend ;
 There stopped ; her thirst was satisfied
 With what this innocent spring supplied :
 Her sanction inwardly she bore,
 And stood apart from human cares :
 But to the world returned no more,
 Although with no unwilling mind
 Help did she give at need, and joined
 The Wharfdale peasants in their prayers.
 At length, thus faintly, faintly tied
 To earth, she was set free, and died.
 Thy soul, exalted Emily,
 Maid of the blasted family,
 Rose to the God from whom it came !
 —In Rylstone Church her mortal frame
 Was buried by her Mother's side.

Most glorious sunset ! and a ray
 Survives—the twilight of this day—
 In that fair Creature whom the fields
 Support, and whom the forest shields ;
 Who, having filled a holy place,
 Partakes, in her degree, Heaven's grace ;
 And bears a memory and a mind
 Raised far above the law of kind ;
 Haunting the spots with lonely cheer
 Which her dear Mistress once held dear :
 Loves most what Emily loved most—
 The enclosure of this church-yard ground ;
 Here wanders like a gliding ghost,
 And every sabbath here is found ;
 Comes with the people when the bells
 Are heard among the moorland dells,

Finds entrance through yon arch, where way
Lies open on the sabbath-day ;
Here walks amid the mournful waste
Of prostrate altars, shrines defaced,
And floors encumbered with rich show
Of fret-work imagery laid low ;
Paces softly, or makes halt,
By fractured cell, or tomb, or vault ;
By plate of monumental brass
Dim-gleaming among weeds and grass,
And sculptured Forms of Warriors brave :
But chiefly by that single grave,

That one sequestered hillock green,
The pensive visitant is seen.
There doth the gentle Creature lie
With those adversities unmoved ;
Calm spectacle, by earth and sky
In their benignity approved !
And aye, methinks, this hoary Pile,
Subdued by outrage and decay,
Looks down upon her with a smile,
A gracious smile, that seems to say—
“ Thou, thou art not a Child of Time,
But Daughter of the Eternal Prime ! ”

ECCLESIASTICAL SONNETS.

IN SERIES.

PART I.

FROM THE INTRODUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY INTO BRITAIN, TO THE CONSUMMATION OF THE PAPAL DOMINION.

‘A verse may catch a wandering Soul, that flies
Profounder Tracts, and by a blest surprise
Convert delight into a Sacrifice.’

I.

INTRODUCTION.

I, who accompanied with faithful pace
Cerulean Duddon from his cloud-fed spring,
And loved with spirit ruled by his to sing
Of mountain-quiet and boon nature's grace ;
I, who essayed the nobler Stream to trace
Of Liberty, and smote the plausible string
Till the checked torrent, proudly triumphing,
Won for herself a lasting resting-place ;
Now seek upon the heights of Time the source
Of a HOLY RIVER, on whose banks are found
Sweet pastoral flowers, and laurels that have crowned
Full oft the unworthy brow of lawless force ;
And, for delight of him who tracks its course,
Immortal amaranth and palms abound.

II.

CONJECTURES.

If there be prophets on whose spirits rest
Past things, revealed like future, they can tell
What Powers, presiding o'er the sacred well
Of Christian Faith, this savage Island blessed
With its first bounty. Wandering through the west,
Did holy Paul * a while in Britain dwell,
And call the Fountain forth by miracle,
And with dread signs the nascent Stream invest !
Or He, whose bonds dropped off, whose prison doors
Flew open, by an Angel's voice unbarred ?
Or some of humbler name, to these wild shores
Storm-driven ; who, having seen the cup of woe
Pass from their Master, sojourned here to guard
The precious Current they had taught to flow !

* See Note.

III.

TREPIDATION OF THE DRUIDS.

DREAMS round the Arch-druid's brow the seamew*
—white

Menai's foam; and toward the mystic ring
Where Angurs stand, the Future questioning,
How slowly the cormorant aims her heavy flight,
Portending ruin to each baleful rite,
That, in the lapse of ages, hath crept o'er
Iluvian truths, and patriarchal lore.
Mighty the Bard: can these meek doctrines blight
His transports? wither his heroic strains?
But all shall be fulfilled;—the Julian spear
Way first opened; and, with Roman chains,
The tidings come of Jesus crucified;
They come—they spread—the weak, the suffering,
Receive the faith, and in the hope abide. [hear;

IV.

DRUIDICAL EXCOMMUNICATION.

MERCY and Love have met thee on thy road,
Thou wretched Outcast, from the gift of fire
And food cut off by sacerdotal ire,
From every sympathy that Man bestowed!
Yet shall it claim our reverence, that to God,
Ancient of days! that to the eternal Sire,
These jealous Ministers of law aspire,
As to the one sole fount whence wisdom flowed,
Justice, and order. Tremblingly escaped,
As if with prescience of the coming storm,
That intimation when the stars were shaped;
And still, 'mid yon thick woods, the primal truth
Lingers through many a superstitious form
That fills the Soul with unavailing rith.

V.

UNCERTAINTY.

ACKNESS surrounds us; seeking, we are lost
In Snowdon's wilds, amid Brigantian coves,
Where the solitary shepherd roves
Along the plain of Sarum, by the ghost
Of Time and shadows of Tradition, crost;
And where the boatman of the Western Isles
Weakens his course—to mark those holy piles
Which yet survive on bleak Iona's coast.
Or these, nor monuments of eldest name,
Or Taliesin's unforgotten lays,
Or characters of Greek or Roman fame,
Or an unquestionable Source have led;
Enough—if eyes, that sought the fountain-head
Vain, upon the growing Rill may gaze.

* This water-fowl was, among the Druids, an emblem of those traditions connected with the deluge that made an

VI.

PERSECUTION.

LAMENT! for Diocletian's fiery sword
Works busy as the lightning; but instinct
With malice ne'er to deadliest weapon linked,
Which God's ethereal store-houses afford:
Against the Followers of the incarnate Lord
It rages;—some are smitten in the field— [shield
Some pierced to the heart through the ineffectual
Of sacred home;—with pomp are others gored
And dreadful respite. Thus was Alban tried,
England's first Martyr, whom no threats could shake;
Self-offered victim, for his friend he died,
And for the faith; nor shall his name forsake
That Hill, whose flowery platform seems to rise
By Nature decked for holiest sacrifice*.

VII.

RECOVERY.

As, when a storm hath ceased, the birds regain
Their cheerfulness, and busily retrim
Their nests, or chant a gratulating hymn
To the blue ether and bespangled plain;
Even so, in many a re-constructed fane,
Have the survivors of this Storm renewed
Their holy rites with vocal gratitude:
And solemn ceremonials they ordain
To celebrate their great deliverance;
Most feelingly instructed 'mid their fear—
That persecution, blind with rage extreme, [nance,
May not the less, through Heaven's mild countenance,
Even in her own despite, both feed and cheer;
For all things are less dreadful than they seem.

VIII.

TEMPTATIONS FROM ROMAN REFINEMENTS.

WATCH, and be firm! for, soul-subduing vice,
Heart-killing luxury, on your steps await.
Fair houses, baths, and banquets delicate,
And temples flashing, bright as polar ice,
Their radiance through the woods—may yet suffice
To sap your hardy virtue, and abate
Your love of Him upon whose forehead sate
The crown of thorns; whose life-blood flowed, the
price
Of your redemption. Shun the insidious arts
That Rome provides, less dreading from her frown
Than from her wily praise, her peaceful gown,
Language, and letters;—these, though fondly viewed
As humanising graces, are but parts
And instruments of deadliest servitude!

important part of their mysteries. The Cormorant was a bird of bad omen.

* See Note.

IX.

DISSENSIONS.

THAT heresies should strike (if truth be scanned
Presumptuously) their roots both wide and deep,
Is natural as dreams to feverish sleep.
Lo! Discord at the altar dares to stand
Uplifting toward high Heaven her fiery brand,
A cherished Priestess of the new-baptized!
But chastisement shall follow peace despised.
The Pictish cloud darkens the enervate land
By Rome abandoned; vain are suppliant cries,
And prayers that would undo her forced farewell;
For she returns not.—Awed by her own knell,
She casts the Britons upon strange Allies,
Soon to become more dreaded enemies
Than heartless misery called them to repel.

X.

STRUGGLE OF THE BRITONS AGAINST THE BARBARIANS.

RISE!—they *have* risen: of brave Aneurin ask
How they have scourged old foes, perfidious friends:
The Spirit of Caractacus descends
Upon the Patriots, animates their task;—
Amazement runs before the towering casque
Of Arthur, bearing through the stormy field
The virgin sculptured on his Christian shield:—
Stretched in the sunny light of victory bask
The Host that followed Urien as he strode
O'er heaps of slain;—from Cambrian wood and
Druids descend, auxiliars of the Cross; [moss
Bards, nursed on blue Plinlimmon's still abode,
Rush on the fight, to harps preferring swords,
And everlasting deeds to burning words!

XI.

SAXON CONQUEST.

NOR wants the cause the panic-striking aid
Of hallelujahs * tost from hill to hill—
For instant victory. But Heaven's high will
Permits a second and a darker shade
Of Pagan night. Afflicted and dismayed,
The Relics of the sword flee to the mountains:
O wretched Land! whose tears have flowed like
fountains;
Whose arts and honours in the dust are laid
By men yet scarcely conscious of a care
For other monuments than those of Earth;
Who, as the fields and woods have given them birth,
Will build their savage fortunes only there;
Content, if foss, and barrow, and the girth
Of long-drawn rampart, witness what they were.

* See Note.

XII.

MONASTERY OF OLD BANGOR *.

*THE oppression of the tumult—wrath and scorn—
The tribulation—and the gleaming blades—*
Such is the impetuous spirit that pervades
The song of Taliesin;—Ours shall mourn [turn
The *unarmed* Host who by their prayers would
The sword from Bangor's walls, and guard the store
Of Aboriginal and Roman lore,
And Christian monuments, that now must burn
To senseless ashes. Mark! how all things *swerv*
From their known course, or vanish like a dream
Another language spreads from coast to coast;
Only perchance some melancholy Stream
And some indignant Hills old names preserve,
When laws, and creeds, and people all are lost!

XIII.

CASUAL INCITEMENT.

A BRIGHT-HAIRED company of youthful slaves,
Beautiful strangers, stand within the pale
Of a sad market, ranged for public sale,
Where Tiber's stream the immortal City laves:
ANGLI by name; and not an ANGEL waves
His wing who could seem lovelier to man's eye
Than they appear to holy Gregory;
Who, having learnt that name, salvation craves
For Them, and for their Land. The earnest Sir
His questions urging, feels, in slender ties
Of chiming sound, commanding sympathies;
DE-IRIANS—he would save them from God's Ire
Subjects of Saxon ÆLLA—they shall sing
Glad HALLE-lujahs to the eternal King!

XIV.

GLAD TIDINGS.

FOR ever hallowed be this morning fair,
Blest be the unconscious shore on which ye tread
And blest the silver Cross, which ye, instead
Of martial banner, in procession bear;
The Cross preceding Him who floats in air,
The pictured Saviour!—By Augustin led,
They come—and onward travel without dread,
Chanting in barbarous ears a tuneful prayer—
Sung for themselves, and those whom they would
free!
Rich conquest waits them:—the tempestuous sea
Of Ignorance, that ran so rough and high
And heeded not the voice of clashing swords,
These good men humble by a few bare words,
And calm with fear of God's divinity.

* See Note.

XV.

PAULINUS *.

UT, to remote Northumbria's royal Hall,
 Where thoughtful Edwin, tutored in the school
 Of sorrow, still maintains a heathen rule,
 Who comes with functions apostolical ?
 Dark him, of shoulders curved, and stature tall,
 Black hair, and vivid eye, and meagre cheek,
 His prominent feature like an eagle's beak ;
 A Man whose aspect doth at once appal
 And strike with reverence. The Monarch leans
 Toward the pure truths this Delegate propounds,
 Repeatedly his own deep mind he sounds
 With careful hesitation,—then convenes
 A synod of his Councillors :—give ear,
 And what a pensive Sage doth utter, hear !

XVI.

PERSUASION.

MAN's life is like a Sparrow, mighty King !
 That—while at banquet with your Chiefs you sit
 Housed near a blazing fire—is seen to fit
 Safe from the wintry tempest. Fluttering,
 Here did it enter ; there, on hasty wing,
 Flies out, and passes on from cold to cold ;
 But whence it came we know not, nor behold
 Whither it goes. Even such, that transient Thing,
 The human Soul ; not utterly unknown
 While in the Body lodged, her warm abode ;
 But from what world She came, what woe or weal
 On her departure waits, no tongue hath shown ;
 This mystery if the Stranger can reveal,
 His be a welcome cordially bestowed † ! ”

XVII.

CONVERSION.

PROMPT transformation works the novel Lore ;
 The Council closed, the Priest in full career
 Rides forth, an armèd man, and hurls a spear
 To desecrate the Fane which heretofore
 He served in folly. Woden falls, and Thor
 Is overturned ; the mace, in battle heaved
 So might they dream) till victory was achieved,
 Drops, and the God himself is seen no more.
 Temple and Altar sink, to hide their shame
 Amid oblivious weeds. “ O come to me,
 Ye heavy laden ! ” such the inviting voice
 Heard near fresh streams ‡ ; and thousands, who
 Rejoice
 In the new Rite—the pledge of sanctity,
 Hall, by regenerate life, the promise claim.

XVIII.

APOLOGY.

NOR scorn the aid which Fancy oft doth lend
 The Soul's eternal interests to promote :
 Death, darkness, danger, are our natural lot ;
 And evil Spirits may our walk attend
 For aught the wisest know or comprehend ;
 Then be good Spirits free to breathe a note
 Of elevation ; let their odours float
 Around these Converts ; and their glories blend,
 The midnight stars outshining, or the blaze
 Of the noon-day. Nor doubt that golden cords
 Of good works, mingling with the visions, raise
 The Soul to purer worlds : and *who* the line
 Shall draw, the limits of the power define,
 That even imperfect faith to man affords ?

XIX.

PRIMITIVE SAXON CLERGY *.

How beautiful your presence, how benign,
 Servants of God ! who not a thought will share
 With the vain world ; who, outwardly as bare
 As winter trees, yield no fallacious sign
 That the firm soul is clothed with fruit divine !
 Such Priest, when service worthy of his care
 Has called him forth to breathe the common air,
 Might seem a saintly Image from its shrine
 Descended :—happy are the eyes that meet
 The Apparition ; evil thoughts are stayed
 At his approach, and low-bowed necks entreat
 A benediction from his voice or hand ;
 Whence grace, through which the heart can
 Understand,
 And vows, that bind the will, in silence made.

XX.

OTHER INFLUENCES.

AH, when the Body, round which in love we clung,
 Is chilled by death, does mutual service fail ?
 Is tender pity then of no avail ?
 Are intercessions of the fervent tongue
 A waste of hope ?—From this sad source have
 Rites that console the Spirit, under grief [sprung
 Which ill can brook more rational relief :
 Hence, prayers are shaped amiss, and dirges sung
 For Souls whose doom is fixed ! The way is smooth
 For Power that travels with the human heart :
 Confession ministers the pang to soothe
 In him who at the ghost of guilt doth start.
 Ye holy Men, so earnest in your care,
 Of your own mighty instruments beware !

* See Note.

† See Note.

‡ See Note.

* See note.

XXI.

SECLUSION.

LANCE, shield, and sword relinquished—at his side
 A bead-roll, in his hand a claspèd book,
 Or staff more harmless than a shepherd's crook,
 The war-worn Chieftain quits the world—to hide
 His thin autumnal locks where Monks abide
 In cloistered privacy. But not to dwell
 In soft repose he comes. Within his cell,
 Round the decaying trunk of human pride,
 At morn, and eve, and midnight's silent hour,
 Do penitential cogitations cling;
 Like ivy, round some ancient elm, they twine
 In grisly folds and strictures serpentine;
 Yet, while they strangle, a fair growth they bring,
 For recompence—their own perennial bower.

XXII.

CONTINUED.

METHINKS that to some vacant hermitage
My feet would rather turn—to some dry nook
 Scooped out of living rock, and near a brook
 Hurled down a mountain-cove from stage to stage,
 Yet tempering, for my sight, its bustling rage
 In the soft heaven of a translucent pool;
 Thence creeping under sylvan arches cool,
 Fit haunt of shapes whose glorious equipage
 Would elevate my dreams. A beechen bowl,
 A maple dish, my furniture should be;
 Crisp, yellow leaves my bed; the hooting owl
 My night-watch: nor should e'er the crested fowl
 From thorp or vill his matins sound for me,
 Tired of the world and all its industry.

XXIII.

REPROOF.

BUT what if One, through grove or flowery mead,
 Indulging thus at will the creeping feet
 Of a voluptuous indolence, should meet
 Thy hovering Shade, O venerable Bede!
 The saint, the scholar, from a circle freed
 Of toil stupendous, in a hallowed seat
 Of learning, where thou heard'st the billows beat
 On a wild coast, rough monitors to feed
 Perpetual industry. Sublime Recluse!
 The recreant soul, that dares to shun the debt
 Imposed on human kind, must first forget
 Thy diligence, thy unrelaxing use
 Of a long life; and, in the hour of death,
 The last dear service of thy passing breath*!

* He expired dictating the last words of a translation of St. John's Gospel.

XXIV.

SAXON MONASTERIES, AND LIGHTS AND SHADES OF THE RELIGION.

By such examples moved to unbought pains,
 The people work like congregated bees;
 Eager to build the quiet Fortresses
 Where Piety, as they believe, obtains
 From Heaven a *general* blessing; timely rains
 Or needful sunshine; prosperous enterprise,
 Justice and peace:—bold faith! yet also rise
 The sacred Structures for less doubtful gains.
 The Sensual think with reverence of the palms
 Which the chaste Votaries seek, beyond the grave.
 If penance be redeemable, thence alms
 Flow to the poor, and freedom to the slave;
 And if full oft the Sanctuary save
 Lives black with guilt, ferocity it calms.

XXV.

MISSIONS AND TRAVELS.

Nor sedentary all: there are who roam
 To scatter seeds of life on barbarous shores;
 Or quit with zealous step their knee-worn floors
 To seek the general mart of Christendom;
 Whence they, like richly-laden merchants, come
 To their beloved cells:—or shall we say
 That, like the Red-cross Knight, they urge their way
 To lead in memorable triumph home
 Truth, their immortal *Una*? Babylon,
 Learned and wise, hath perished utterly,
 Nor leaves her Speech one word to aid the sigh
 That would lament her;—Memphis, Tyre, are gone
 With all their Arts,—but classic lore glides on
 By these Religious saved for all posterity.

XXVI.

ALFRED.

BEHOLD a pupil of the monkish gown,
 The pious ALFRED, King to Justice dear!
 Lord of the harp and liberating spear;
 Mirror of Princes! Indigent Renown
 Might range the starry ether for a crown
 Equal to *his* deserts, who, like the year,
 Pours forth his bounty, like the day doth cheer,
 And awes like night with mercy-tempered frown.
 Ease from this noble miser of his time
 No moment steals; pain narrows not his cares*.
 Though small his kingdom as a spark or gem,
 Of Alfred boasts remote Jerusalem,
 And Christian India, through her wide-spread clime
 In sacred converse gifts with Alfred shares.

* See Note.

XXVII.

HIS DESCENDANTS.

WHEN thy great soul was freed from mortal chains,
 Circling of England! many a bitter shower
 All on thy tomb; but emulative power
 Flowed in thy line through undegenerate veins.
 The Race of Alfred covet glorious pains
 When dangers threaten, dangers ever new!
 Black tempests bursting, blacker still in view!
 Not manly sovereignty its hold retains;
 The root sincere, the branches bold to strive
 With the fierce tempest, while, within the round
 Their protection, gentle virtues thrive;
 Soft, 'mid some green plot of open ground,
 Where as the oak extends its dewy gloom,
 The fostered hyacinths spread their purple bloom.

XXVIII.

INFLUENCE ABUSED.

LEDGED by Ambition, who with subtlest skill
 Changes her means, the Enthusiast as a dupe
 Shall soar, and as a hypocrite can stoop,
 And turn the instruments of good to ill,
 Moulding the credulous people to his will.
 St. DUNSTAN:—from its Benedictine coop
 Leads the master Mind, at whose fell swoop
 The chaste affections tremble to fulfil
 Their purposes. Behold, pre-signified,
 The Might of spiritual sway! his thoughts, his
 dreams,
 In the supernatural world abide:
 Evant a throng of Followers, filled with pride
 What they see of virtues pushed to extremes,
 All sorceries of talent misapplied.

XXIX.

DANISH CONQUESTS.

WE to the Crown that doth the Cowl obey*!
 In passion, checking arms that would restrain
 The incessant Rovers of the northern main,
 Hops to restore and spread a Pagan sway:
 The Gospel-truth is potent to allay
 Freeness and rage; and soon the cruel Dane
 Falls, through the influence of her gentle reign,
 Her native superstitions melt away.
 Thus, often, when thick gloom the east o'ershrouds,
 The full-orbed Moon, slow-climbing, doth appear
 Sently to consume the heavy clouds;
 Now no one can resolve; but every eye
 Around her sees, while air is hushed, a clear
 And widening circuit of ethereal sky.

* See Note.

XXX.

CANUTE.

A PLEASANT music floats along the Mere,
 From Monks in Ely chanting service high,
 While-as Canute the King is rowing by: [near,
 "My Oarsmen," quoth the mighty King, "draw
 "That we the sweet song of the Monks may hear!"
 He listens (all past conquests and all schemes
 Of future vanishing like empty dreams)
 Heart-touched, and haply not without a tear.
 The Royal Minstrel, ere the choir is still,
 While his free Barge skims the smooth flood along,
 Gives to that rapture an accordant Rhyme*.
 O suffering Earth! be thankful; sternest clime
 And rudest age are subject to the thrill
 Of heaven-descended Piety and Song.

XXXI.

THE NORMAN CONQUEST.

THE woman-hearted Confessor prepares
 The evanescence of the Saxon line.
 Hark! 'tis the tolling Curfew!—the stars shine;
 But of the lights that cherish household cares
 And festive gladness, burns not one that dares
 To twinkle after that dull stroke of thine,
 Emblem and instrument, from Thames to Tyne,
 Of force that daunts, and cunning that ensnares!
 Yet as the terrors of the lordly bell,
 That quench, from hut to palace, lamps and fires,
 Touch not the tapers of the sacred quires;
 Even so a thralldom, studious to expel
 Old laws, and ancient customs to derange,
 To Creed or Ritual brings no fatal change.

XXXII.

COLDLY we spake. The Saxons, overpowered
 By wrong triumphant through its own excess,
 From fields laid waste, from house and home
 Devoured
 By flames, look up to heaven and crave redress
 From God's eternal justice. Pitiless
 Though men be, there are angels that can feel
 For wounds that death alone has power to heal,
 For penitent guilt, and innocent distress.
 And has a Champion risen in arms to try
 His Country's virtue, fought, and breathes no more;
 Him in their hearts the people canonize;
 And far above the mine's most precious ore
 The least small pittance of bare mould they prize
 Scooped from the sacred earth where his dear relics
 Lie.

* Which is still extant.

XXXIII.

THE COUNCIL OF CLERMONT.

"AND shall," the Pontiff asks, "profaneness flow
 "From Nazareth—source of Christian piety,
 "From Bethlehem, from the Mounts of Agony
 "And glorified Ascension? Warriors, go,
 "With prayers and blessings we your path will sow;
 "Like Moses hold our hands erect, till ye
 "Have chased far off by righteous victory
 "These sons of Amalek, or laid them low!"—
 "GOD WILLETH IT," the whole assembly cry;
 Shout which the enraptured multitude astounds!
 The Council-roof and Clermont's towers reply;—
 "God willeth it," from hill to hill rebounds,
 And, in awe-stricken Countries far and nigh,
 Through 'Nature's hollow arch' that voice
 resounds*.

XXXIV.

CRUSADES.

THE turbaned Race are poured in thickening swarms
 Along the west; though driven from Aquitaine,
 The Crescent glitters on the towers of Spain;
 And soft Italia feels renewed alarms;
 The scimitar, that yields not to the charms
 Of ease, the narrow Bosphorus will disdain;
 Nor long (that crossed) would Grecian hills detain
 Their tents, and check the current of their arms.
 Then blame not those who, by the mightiest lever
 Known to the moral world, Imagination,
 Upheave, so seems it, from her natural station
 All Christendom:—they sweep along (was never
 So huge a host!)—to tear from the Unbeliever
 The precious Tomb, their haven of salvation.

XXXV.

RICHARD I.

REDOUBTED King, of courage leonine,
 I mark thee, Richard! urgent to equip
 Thy warlike person with the staff and scrip;
 I watch thee sailing o'er the midland brine;
 In conquered Cyprus see thy Bride decline
 Her blushing cheek, love-vows upon her lip,
 And see love-emblems streaming from thy ship,
 As thence she holds her way to Palestine.
 My Song, a fearless homager, would attend
 Thy thundering battle-axe as it cleaves the press
 Of war, but duty summons her away
 To tell—how, finding in the rash distress
 Of those Enthusiasts a subservient friend,
 To giddier heights hath clomb the Papal sway.

* The decision of this council was believed to be instantly known in remote parts of Europe.

XXXVI.

AN INTERDICT.

REALMS quake by turns: proud Arbitress of grace,
 The Church, by mandate shadowing forth the
 power
 She arrogates o'er heaven's eternal door,
 Closes the gates of every sacred place.
 Straight from the sun and tainted air's embrace
 All sacred things are covered: cheerful morn
 Grows sad as night—no seemly garb is worn,
 Nor is a face allowed to meet a face
 With natural smiles of greeting. Bells are dumb
 Ditches are graves—funereal rites denied;
 And in the church-yard he must take his bride
 Who dares be wedded! Fancies thickly come
 Into the pensive heart ill fortified,
 And comfortless despairs the soul benumb.

XXXVII.

PAPAL ABUSES.

As with the Stream our voyage we pursue,
 The gross materials of this world present
 A marvellous study of wild accident;
 Uncouth proximities of old and new;
 And bold transfigurations, more untrue
 (As might be deemed) to disciplined intent
 Than aught the sky's fantastic element,
 When most fantastic, offers to the view.
 Saw we not Henry scourged at Becket's shrine!
 Lo! John self-stripped of his insignia:—crown,
 Sceptre and mantle, sword and ring, laid down
 At a proud Legate's feet! The spears that line
 Baronial halls, the opprobrious insult fee;
 And angry Ocean roars a vain appeal.

XXXVIII.

SCENE IN VENICE.

BLACK Demons hovering o'er his mitred head,
 To Caesar's Successor the Pontiff spake;
 "Ere I absolve thee, stoop! that on thy neck
 "Levelled with earth this foot of mine may tread
 Then he, who to the altar had been led,
 He, whose strong arm the Orient could not check
 He, who had held the Soldan at his beck,
 Stooped, of all glory disinherited,
 And even the common dignity of man!—
 Amazement strikes the crowd: while many turn
 Their eyes away in sorrow, others burn
 With scorn, invoking a vindictive ban
 From outraged Nature; but the sense of most
 In abject sympathy with power is lost.

XXXIX.

PAPAL DOMINION.

LESS to Peter's Chair the viewless wind
 must come and ask permission to blow,
 that further empire would it have? for now
 ghostly Domination, unconfin'd
 that by dreaming Bards to Love assigned,
 is there in sober truth—to raise the low,
 perplex the wise, the strong to overthrow;
 through earth and heaven to bind and to unbind!—
 resist—the thunder quails thee!—crouch—rebuff
 all be thy recompence! from land to land
 the ancient thrones of Christendom are stuff
 for occupation of a magic wand,
 and 'tis the Pope that wields it:—whether rough
 or smooth his front, our world is in his hand!

PART II.

TO THE CLOSE OF THE TROUBLES IN THE REIGN OF
CHARLES I.

I.

ow soon—alas! did Man, created pure—
 Angels guarded, deviate from the line
 prescribed to duty:—woeful forfeiture
 made by wilful breach of law divine.
 With like perverseness did the Church abjure
 obedience to her Lord, and haste to twine,
 with Heaven-born flowers that shall for aye endure,
 weeds on whose front the world had fixed her sign.
 Man,—if with thy trials thus it fares,
 how good can smooth the way to evil choice,
 from all rash censure be the mind kept free;
 the only judges right who weighs, compares,
 and, in the sternest sentence which his voice
 pronounces, ne'er abandons Charity.

II.

om false assumption rose, and fondly hail'd
 superstition, spread the Papal power;
 yet do not deem the Autocracy prevail'd
 thus only, even in error's darkest hour. [tower
 she daunts, forth-thundering from her spiritual
 rude rapine, or with gentle lure she tames.
 Justice and Peace through Her uphold their claims;
 and Chastity finds many a sheltering bower.
 Calm there is none that if controul'd or sway'd
 by her commands partakes not, in degree,
 of good, o'er manners arts and arms, diffused:
 yes, to thy domination, Roman See,
 how miserably, oft monstrously, abused
 by blind ambition, be this tribute paid.

III.

CISTERCIAN MONASTERY.

*"HERE Man more purely lives, less oft doth fall,
 More promptly rises, walks with stricter heed,
 More safely rests, dies happier, is freed
 Earlier from cleansing fires, and gains withal
 A brighter crown*."*—On yon Cistercian wall
 That confident assurance may be read;
 And, to like shelter, from the world have fled
 Increasing multitudes. The potent call
 Doubtless shall cheat full oft the heart's desires;
 Yet, while the rugged Age on pliant knee
 Vows to rapt Fancy humble fealty,
 A gentler life spreads round the holy spires;
 Where'er they rise, the sylvan waste retires,
 And æry harvests crown the fertile lea.

IV.

DEPLORABLE his lot who tills the ground,
 His whole life long tills it, with heartless toil
 Of villain-service, passing with the soil
 To each new Master, like a steer or hound,
 Or like a rooted tree, or stone earth-bound;
 But mark how gladly, through their own domains,
 The Monks relax or break these iron chains;
 While Mercy, uttering, through their voice, a sound
 Echoed in Heaven, cries out, "Ye Chiefs, abate
 These legalized oppressions! Man—whose name
 And nature God disdained not; Man—whose soul
 Christ died for—cannot forfeit his high claim
 To live and move exempt from all controul
 Which fellow-feeling doth not mitigate!"

V.

MONKS AND SCHOOLMEN.

RECORD we too, with just and faithful pen,
 That many hooded Cenobites there are,
 Who in their private cells have yet a care
 Of public quiet; unambitious Men,
 Counsellors for the world, of piercing ken;
 Whose fervent exhortations from afar
 Move Princes to their duty, peace or war;
 And oft-times in the most forbidding den
 Of solitude, with love of science strong,
 How patiently the yoke of thought they bear!
 How subtly glide its finest threads along!
 Spirits that crowd the intellectual sphere
 With mazy boundaries, as the astronomer
 With orb and cycle girds the starry throng.

* See Note.

VI.

OTHER BENEFITS.

AND, not in vain embodied to the sight,
 Religion finds even in the stern retreat
 Of feudal sway her own appropriate seat ;
 From the collegiate pomps on Windsor's height
 Down to the humbler altar, which the Knight
 And his Retainers of the embattled hall
 Seek in domestic oratory small,
 For prayer in stillness, or the chanted rite ;
 Then chiefly dear, when foes are planted round,
 Who teach the intrepid guardians of the place—
 Hourly exposed to death, with famine worn,
 And suffering under many a perilous wound—
 How sad would be their durance, if forlorn
 Of offices dispensing heavenly grace !

VII.

CONTINUED.

AND what melodious sounds at times prevail !
 And, ever and anon, how bright a gleam
 Pours on the surface of the turbid Stream !
 What heartfelt fragrance mingles with the gale
 That swells the bosom of our passing sail !
 For where, but on *this* River's margin, blow
 Those flowers of chivalry, to bind the brow
 Of hardihood with wreaths that shall not fail ?—
 Fair Court of Edward ! wonder of the world !
 I see a matchless blazonry unfurled
 Of wisdom, magnanimity, and love ;
 And meekness tempering honourable pride ;
 The lamb is couching by the lion's side,
 And near the flame-eyed eagle sits the dove.

VIII.

CRUSADERS.

FURL we the sails, and pass with tardy oars
 Through these bright regions, casting many a glance
 Upon the dream-like issues—the romance
 Of many-coloured life that Fortune pours
 Round the Crusaders, till on distant shores
 Their labours end ; or they return to lie,
 The vow performed, in cross-legged effigy,
 Devoutly stretched upon their chancel floors.
 Am I deceived ? Or is their requiem chanted
 By voices never mute when Heaven unties
 Her inmost, softest, tenderest harmonies ;
 Requiem which Earth takes up with voice undaunted,
 When she would tell how Brave, and Good, and
 Wise,
 For their high guerdon not in vain have panted !

IX.

As faith thus sanctified the warrior's crest
 While from the Papal Unity there came,
 What feebler means had fail'd to give, one aim
 Diffused thro' all the regions of the West ;
 So does her Unity its power attest
 By works of Art, that shed, on the outward frame
 Of worship, glory and grace, which who shall blame
 That ever looked to heaven for final rest ?
 Hail countless Temples ! that so well befit
 Your ministry ; that, as ye rise and take
 Form spirit and character from holy writ,
 Give to devotion, wheresoe'er awake,
 Pinions of high and higher sweep, and make
 The unconverted soul with awe submit.

X.

Where long and deeply hath been fixed the root
 In the blest soil of gospel truth, the Tree,
 (Blighted or scathed tho' many branches be,
 Put forth to wither, many a hopeful shoot)
 Can never cease to bear celestial fruit.
 Witness the Church that oft times, with effect
 Dear to the saints, strives earnestly to eject
 Her bane, her vital energies recruit.
 Lamenting, do not hopelessly repine
 When such good work is doomed to be undone,
 The conquests lost that were so hardly won :—
 All promises vouchsafed by Heaven will shine
 In light confirmed while years their course shall run
 Confirmed alike in progress and decline.

XI.

TRANSUBSTANTIATION.

ENOUGH ! for see, with dim association
 The tapers burn ; the odorous incense feeds
 A greedy flame ; the pompous mass proceeds ;
 The Priest bestows the appointed consecration ;
 And, while the Host is raised, its elevation
 An awe and supernatural horror breeds ;
 And all the people bow their heads, like reeds
 To a soft breeze, in lowly adoration.
 This Valdo brooks not. On the banks of Rhone
 He taught, till persecution chased him thence,
 To adore the Invisible, and Him alone.
 Nor are his Followers loth to seek defence,
 Mid woods and wilds, on Nature's craggy throne,
 From rites that trample upon soul and sense.

XII.

THE VAUDOIS.

UT whence came they who for the Saviour Lord
 ave long borne witness as the Scriptures teach?—
 ges ere Valdo raised his voice to preach

Gallic ears the unadulterate Word,
 heir fugitive Progenitors explored
 balpine vales, in quest of safe retreats
 here that pure Church survives, though summer
 heats

pen a passage to the Romish sword,
 r as it dares to follow. Herbs self-sown,
 nd fruitage gathered from the chesnut wood,
 urish the sufferers then; and mists, that brood
 er chasms with new-fallen obstacles bestrown,
 rotect them; and the eternal snow that daunts
 iens, is God's good winter for their haunts.

XIII.

RAISED be the Rivers, from their mountain springs
 outing to Freedom, "Plant thy banners here!"
 o harassed Piety, "Dismiss thy fear,
 nd in our caverns smooth thy ruffled wings!"
 or be unthanked their final lingerings—
 tent, but not to high-souled Passion's ear—
 id reedy fens wide-spread and marshes drear,
 heir own creation. Such glad welcomings
 o Po was heard to give where Venice rose
 ailed from aloft those Heirs of truth divine
 ho near his fountains sought obscure repose,
 et came prepared as glorious lights to shine,
 ould that be needed for their sacred Charge;
 est Prisoners They, whose spirits were at large!

XIV.

WALDENSES.

HOSE had given earliest notice, as the lark
 rings from the ground the morn to gratulate;
 rather rose the day to antedate,
 striking out a solitary spark, [dark.—
 hen all the world with midnight gloom was
 en followed the Waldensian bands, whom Hate
 vain endeavours to exterminate,
 hom Obloquy pursues with hideous bark*:
 at they desist not;—and the sacred fire,
 kindled thus, from dens and savage woods
 oves, handed on with never-ceasing care,
 rough courts, through camps, o'er liminary floods;
 lacks this sea-girt Isle a timely share
 the new Flame, not suffered to expire.

* See Note.

XV.

ARCHBISHOP CHICHELY TO HENRY V.

"WHAT best in wilderness or cultured field
 "The lively beauty of the leopard shows?
 "What flower in meadow-ground or garden grows
 "That to the towering lily doth not yield?
 "Let both meet only on thy royal shield!
 "Go forth, great King! claim what thy birth bestows;
 "Conquer the Gallic lily which thy foes
 "Dare to usurp;—thou hast a sword to wield,
 "And Heaven will crown the right."—The mitred
 Sire

Thus spake—and lo! a Fleet, for Gaul address,
 Ploughs her bold course across the wondering seas;
 For, sooth to say, ambition, in the breast
 Of youthful heroes, is no sullen fire,
 But one that leaps to meet the fanning breeze.

XVI.

WARS OF YORK AND LANCASTER.

THUS is the storm abated by the craft
 Of a shrewd Counsellor, eager to protect [checked,
 The Church, whose power hath recently been
 Whose monstrous riches threatened. So the shaft
 Of victory mounts high, and blood is quaffed
 In fields that rival Cressy and Poitiers—
 Pride to be washed away by bitter tears!
 For deep as hell itself, the avenging draught
 Of civil slaughter. Yet, while temporal power
 Is by these shocks exhausted, spiritual truth
 Maintains the else endangered gift of life;
 Proceeds from infancy to lusty youth;
 And, under cover of this woeful strife,
 Gathers unblighted strength from hour to hour.

XVII.

WICLIFFE.

ONCE more the Church is seized with sudden fear,
 And at her call is Wicliffe disinhumed:
 Yea, his dry bones to ashes are consumed
 And flung into the brook that travels near; [hear
 Forthwith, that ancient Voice which Streams can
 Thus speaks (that Voice which walks upon the wind,
 Though seldom heard by busy human kind)—
 "As thou these ashes, little Brook! wilt bear
 "Into the Avon, Avon to the tide
 "Of Severn, Severn to the narrow seas,
 "Into main Ocean they, this deed accurst
 "An emblem yields to friends and enemies
 "How the bold Teacher's Doctrine, sanctified
 "By truth, shall spread, throughout the world
 dispersed."

XVIII.

CORRUPTIONS OF THE HIGHER CLERGY.

"Woe to you, Prelates ! rioting in ease
 "And cumbrous wealth—the shame of your estate ;
 "You, on whose progress dazzling trains await
 "Of pompous horses ; whom vain titles please ;
 "Who will be served by others on their knees,
 "Yet will yourselves to God no service pay ;
 "Pastors who neither take nor point the way
 "To Heaven ; for, either lost in vanities
 "Ye have no skill to teach, or if ye know
 "And speak the word——" Alas ! of fearful
 things

'Tis the most fearful when the people's eye
 Abuse hath cleared from vain imaginings ;
 And taught the general voice to prophesy
 Of Justice armed, and Pride to be laid low.

XIX.

ABUSE OF MONASTIC POWER.

AND what is Penance with her knotted thong ;
 Mortification with the shirt of hair,
 Wan cheek, and knees indurated with prayer,
 Vigils, and fastings rigorous as long ;
 If cloistered Avarice scruple not to wrong
 The pious, humble, useful Secular,
 And rob the people of his daily care,
 Scorning that world whose blindness makes her
 strong ?

Inversion strange ! that, unto One who lives
 For self, and struggles with himself alone,
 The amplest share of heavenly favour gives ;
 That to a Monk allots, both in the esteem
 Of God and man, place higher than to him
 Who on the good of others builds his own !

XX.

MONASTIC VOLUPTUOUSNESS.

YET more,—round many a Convent's blazing fire
 Unhallowed threads of revelry are spun ;
 There Venus sits disguised like a Nun,—
 While Bacchus, clothed in semblance of a Friar,
 Pours out his choicest beverage high and higher
 Sparkling, until it cannot choose but run
 Over the bowl, whose silver lip hath won
 An instant kiss of masterful desire—
 To stay the precious waste. Through every brain
 The domination of the sprightly juice
 Spreads high conceits to madding Fancy dear,
 Till the arched roof, with resolute abuse
 Of its grave echoes, swells a choral strain,
 Whose votive burthen is—"OUR KINGDOM'S HERE!"

XXI.

DISSOLUTION OF THE MONASTERIES.

THREATS come which no submission may assuage,
 No sacrifice avert, no power dispute ;
 The tapers shall be quenched, the belfries mute,
 And, 'mid their choirs unroofed by selfish rage,
 The warbling wren shall find a leafy cage ;
 The gadding bramble hang her purple fruit ;
 And the green lizard and the gilded newt
 Lead unmolested lives, and die of age.
 The owl of evening and the woodland fox
 For their abode the shrines of Waltham choose :
 Proud Glastonbury can no more refuse
 To stoop her head before these desperate shocks—
 She whose high pomp displaced, as story tells,
 Arimathean Joseph's wattled cells.

XXII.

THE SAME SUBJECT.

THE lovely Nun (submissive, but more meek
 Through saintly habit than from effort due
 To unrelenting mandates that pursue
 With equal wrath the steps of strong and weak)
 Goes forth—unveiling timidly a cheek
 Suffused with blushes of celestial hue,
 While through the Convent's gate to open view
 Softly she glides, another home to seek.
 Not Iris, issuing from her cloudy shrine,
 An Apparition more divinely bright !
 Not more attractive to the dazzled sight
 Those watery glories, on the stormy brine
 Poured forth, while summer suns at distance shine
 And the green vales lie hushed in sober light !

XXIII.

CONTINUED.

YET many a Novice of the cloistral shade,
 And many chained by vows, with eager glee
 The warrant hail, exulting to be free ;
 Like ships before whose keels, full long embayed
 In polar ice, propitious winds have made
 Unlooked for outlet to an open sea,
 Their liquid world, for bold discovery,
 In all her quarters temptingly displayed !
 Hope guides the young ; but when the old must
 pass
 The threshold, whither shall they turn to find
 The hospitality—the alms (alas !
 Alms may be needed) which that House bestowed
 Can they, in faith and worship, train the mind
 To keep this new and questionable road ?

XXIV.

SAINTS.

YE, too, must fly before a chasing hand,
 Angels and Saints, in every hamlet mourned !
 Ah ! if the old idolatry be spurned,
 Let not your radiant Shapes desert the Land :
 Her adoration was not your demand,
 The fond heart proffered it—the servile heart ;
 And therefore are ye summoned to depart,
 Michael, and thou, St. George, whose flaming brand
 The Dragon quelled ; and valiant Margaret
 Whose rival sword a like Opponent slew :
 And rapt Cecilia, seraph-haunted Queen
 Of harmony ; and weeping Magdalene,
 Who in the penitential desert met
 Tales sweet as those that over Eden blew !

XXV.

THE VIRGIN.

MOTHER ! whose virgin bosom was uncrust
 With the least shade of thought to sin allied ;
 Woman ! above all women glorified,
 Our tainted nature's solitary boast ;
 Purer than foam on central ocean tost ;
 Brighter than eastern skies at daybreak strewn
 With fancied roses, than the unblemished moon
 Before her wane begins on heaven's blue coast ;
 Thy Image falls to earth. Yet some, I ween,
 Not unforgiven the suppliant knee might bend,
 As to a visible Power, in which did blend
 All that was mixed and reconciled in Thee
 Of mother's love with maiden purity,
 Of high with low, celestial with terrene !

XXVI.

APOLOGY.

Nor utterly unworthy to endure
 Was the supremacy of crafty Rome ;
 Age after age to the arch of Christendom
 Aërial keystone haughtily secure ;
 Supremacy from Heaven transmitted pure,
 As many hold ; and, therefore, to the tomb
 Pass, some through fire—and by the scaffold some—
 Like saintly Fisher, and unbending More.
 Lightly for both the bosom's lord did sit
 Upon his throne ; ' unssoftened, undismayed
 By aught that mingled with the tragic scene
 Of pity or fear ; and More's gay genius played
 With the inoffensive sword of native wit,
 Than the bare axe more luminous and keen.

XXVII.

IMAGINATIVE REGRETS.

DEEP is the lamentation ! Not alone
 From Sages justly honoured by mankind ;
 But from the ghostly tenants of the wind,
 Demons and Spirits, many a dolorous groan
 Issues for that dominion overthrown :
 Proud Tiber grieves, and far-off Ganges, blind
 As his own worshippers : and Nile, reclined
 Upon his monstrous urn, the farewell moan
 Renews. Through every forest, cave, and den,
 Where frauds were hatched of old, hath sorrow
 past—
 Hangs o'er the Arabian Prophet's native Waste,
 Where once his airy helpers schemed and planned
 Mid spectral lakes bemocking thirsty men,
 And stalking pillars built of fiery sand.

XXVIII.

REFLECTIONS.

GRANT, that by this unsparing hurricane
 Green leaves with yellow mixed are torn away,
 And goodly fruitage with the mother spray ;
 'Twere madness—wished we, therefore, to detain,
 With hands stretched forth in mollified disdain,
 The 'trumpetry' that ascends in bare display—
 Bulls, pardons, relies, crows black, white, and grey—
 Upwhirled, and flying o'er the ethereal plain
 Fast bound for Limbo Lake. And yet not choice
 But habit rules the unreflecting herd,
 And airy bonds are hardest to disown ;
 Hence, with the spiritual sovereignty transferred
 Unto itself, the Crown assumes a voice
 Of reckless mastery, hitherto unknown.

XXIX.

TRANSLATION OF THE BIBLE.

BUT, to outweigh all harm, the sacred Book,
 In dusty sequestration wrapt too long,
 Assumes the accents of our native tongue ;
 And he who guides the plough, or wields the crook,
 With understanding spirit now may look
 Upon her records, listen to her song,
 And sift her laws—much wondering that the wrong,
 Which Faith has suffered, Heaven could calmly
 brook.

Transcendent boon ! noblest that earthly King
 Ever bestowed to equalize and bless
 Under the weight of mortal wretchedness !
 But passions spread like plagues, and thousands wild
 With bigotry shall tread the Offering
 Beneath their feet, detested and defiled.

XXX.

THE POINT AT ISSUE.

For what contend the wise?—for nothing less
 Than that the Soul, freed from the bonds of Sense,
 And to her God restored by evidence
 Of things not seen, drawn forth from their recess,
 Root there, and not in forms, her holiness ;—
 For Faith, which to the Patriarchs did dispense
 Sure guidance, ere a ceremonial fence
 Was needful round men thirsting to transgress ;—
 For Faith, more perfect still, with which the Lord
 Of all, himself a Spirit, in the youth
 Of Christian aspiration, deigned to fill
 The temples of their hearts who, with his word
 Informed, were resolute to do his will,
 And worship him in spirit and in truth.

XXXI.

EDWARD VI.

‘SWEET is the holiness of Youth’—so felt
 Time-honoured Chaucer speaking through that Lay
 By which the Prioress beguiled the way,
 And many a Pilgrim’s rugged heart did melt.
 Hadst thou, loved Bard ! whose spirit often dwelt
 In the clear land of vision, but foreseen
 King, child, and seraph, blended in the mien
 Of pious Edward kneeling as he knelt
 In meek and simple infancy, what joy
 For universal Christendom had thrilled
 Thy heart ! what hopes inspired thy genius, skilled
 (O great Precursor, genuine morning Star)
 The lucid shafts of reason to employ,
 Piercing the Papal darkness from afar !

XXXII.

EDWARD SIGNING THE WARRANT FOR THE
 EXECUTION OF JOAN OF KENT.

THE tears of man in various measure gush
 From various sources ; gently overflow
 From blissful transport some—from clefts of woe
 Some with ungovernable impulse rush ;
 And some, coëval with the earliest blush
 Of infant passion, scarcely dare to show
 Their pearly lustre—coming but to go ;
 And some break forth when others’ sorrows crush
 The sympathising heart. Nor these, nor yet
 The noblest drops to admiration known,
 To gratitude, to injuries forgiven—
 Claim Heaven’s regard like waters that have wet
 The innocent eyes of youthful Monarchs driven
 To pen the mandates, nature doth disown.

XXXIII.

REVIVAL OF POPERY.

THE saintly Youth has ceased to rule, disrowned
 By unrelenting Death. O People keen
 For change, to whom the new looks always green !
 Rejoicing did they cast upon the ground
 Their Gods of wood and stone ; and, at the sound
 Of counter-proclamation, now are seen,
 (Proud triumph is it for a sullen Queen !)
 Lifting them up, the worship to confound
 Of the Most High. Again do they invoke
 The Creature, to the Creature glory give ;
 Again with frankincense the altars smoke
 Like those the Heathen served ; and mass is sung ;
 And prayer, man’s rational prerogative,
 Runs through blind channels of an unknown tongue.

XXXIV.

LATIMER AND RIDLEY.

How fast the Marian death-list is unrolled !
 See Latimer and Ridley in the might
 Of Faith stand coupled for a common flight !
 One (like those prophets whom God sent of old)
 Transfigured *, from this kindling hath foretold
 A torch of inextinguishable light ;
 The Other gains a confidence as bold ;
 And thus they foil their enemy’s despoise.
 The penal instruments, the shows of crime,
 Are glorified while this once-mitred pair
 Of saintly Friends the ‘murderer’s chain partake.
 Corded, and burning at the social stake :
 Earth never witnessed object more sublime
 In constancy, in fellowship more fair !

XXXV.

CRANMER.

OUTSTRETCHING flame-ward his upbraided hand
 (O God of mercy, may no earthly Seat
 Of judgment such presumptuous doom repeat !)
 Amid the shuddering through both Cranmer stand
 Firm as the stake to which with iron band
 His frame is tied ; firm from the naked feet
 To the bare head. The victory is complete ;
 The shrouded Body to the Soul’s command
 Answers with more than Indian fortitude,
 Through all her nerves with finer sense endued,
 Till breath departs in blissful aspiration :
 Then, ’mid the ghastly ruins of the fire,
 Behold the unalterable heart entire, [tion!
 Emblem of faith untouched, miraculous attesta

* See Note.

† For the belief in this fact, see the contemporary Histories.

XXXVI.

GENERAL VIEW OF THE TROUBLES OF THE
REFORMATION.

aid, glorious Martyrs, from your fields of light,
 our mortal ken! Inspire a perfect trust
 (While we look round) that Heaven's decrees are
 Which few can hold committed to a fight [just:
 that shows, ev'n on its better side, the might
 of proud Self-will, Rapacity, and Lust,
 mid clouds enveloped of polemic dust,
 Which showers of blood seem rather to incite
 than to allay. Anathemas are hurled
 from both sides; veteran thunders (the brute test
 of truth) are met by fulminations new—
 artarean flags are caught at, and unfurled—
 friends strike at friends—the flying shall pursue—
 and Victory sickens, ignorant where to rest!

XXXVII.

ENGLISH REFORMERS IN EXILE.

CATTERING, like birds escaped the fowler's net,
 come seek with timely flight a foreign strand;
 lost happy, re-assembled in a land
 your dauntless Luther freed, could they forget
 their Country's woes. But scarcely have they met,
 partners in faith, and brothers in distress,
 ere to pour forth their common thankfulness,
 ere hope declines:—their union is beset
 with speculative notions rashly sown,
 whence thickly-sprouting growth of poisonous
 weeds;
 their forms are broken staves; their passions,
 that master them. How enviably blest [steeds
 he who can, by help of grace, enthrone
 the peace of God within his single breast!

XXXVIII.

ELIZABETH.

AIL, Virgin Queen! o'er many an envious bar
 triumphant, snatched from many a treacherous
 all hail, sage Lady, whom a grateful Isle [wile!
 hath blest, respiring from that dismal war
 killed by thy voice! But quickly from afar
 defiance breathes with more malignant aim;
 and alien storms with home-bred ferments claim
 portentous fellowship. Her silver car,
 by sleepless prudence ruled, glides slowly on;
 unhurt by violence, from menaced taint
 emerging pure, and seemingly more bright:
 ah! wherefore yields it to a foul constraint
 black as the clouds its beams dispersed, while shone,
 by men and angels blest, the glorious light?

XXXIX.

EMINENT REFORMERS.

METHINKS that I could trip o'er heaviest soil,
 Light as a buoyant bark from wave to wave,
 Were mine the trusty staff that JEWEL gave
 To youthful HOOKER, in familiar style
 The gift exalting, and with playful smile *:
 For thus equipped, and bearing on his head
 The Donor's farewell blessing, can he dread
 Tempest, or length of way, or weight of toil?—
 More sweet than odours caught by him who sails
 Near spicy shores of Araby the blest,
 A thousand times more exquisitely sweet,
 The freight of holy feeling which we meet,
 In thoughtful moments, wafted by the gales
 From fields where good men walk, or bowers
 wherein they rest.

XL.

THE SAME.

HOLY and heavenly Spirits as they are,
 Spotless in life, and eloquent as wise,
 With what entire affection do they prize [care
 Their Church reformed! labouring with earnest
 To baffle all that may her strength impair;
 That Church, the unperverted Gospel's seat;
 In their afflictions a divine retreat; [prayer!—
 Source of their liveliest hope, and tenderest
 The truth exploring with an equal mind,
 In doctrine and communion they have sought
 Firmly between the two extremes to steer;
 But theirs the wise man's ordinary lot,
 To trace right courses for the stubborn blind,
 And prophesy to ears that will not hear.

XLI.

DISTRACTIONS.

MEN, who have ceased to reverence, soon defy
 Their forefathers; lo! sects are formed, and split
 With morbid restlessness;—the ecstatic fit
 Spreads wide; though special mysteries multiply,
The Saints must govern, is their common cry;
 And so they labour, deeming Holy Writ
 Disgraced by aught that seems content to sit
 Beneath the roof of settled Modesty.
 The Romanist exults; fresh hope he draws
 From the confusion, craftily incites
 The overweening, personates the mad—
 To heap disgust upon the worthier Cause:
 Totters the Throne; the new-born Church is sad
 For every wave against her peace unites.

* See Note.

XLII.

GUNPOWDER PLOT.

FEAR hath a hundred eyes that all agree
 To plague her beating heart ; and there is one
 (Nor idlest that !) which holds communion
 With things that were not, yet were *meant* to be.
 Aghast within its gloomy cavity
 That eye (which sees as if fulfilled and done
 Crimes that might stop the motion of the sun)
 Beholds the horrible catastrophe
 Of an assembled Senate unredeemed
 From subterraneous Treason's darkling power :
 Merciless act of sorrow infinite !
 Worse than the product of that dismal night,
 When gushing, copious as a thunder-shower,
 The blood of Huguenots through Paris streamed.

XLIII.

ILLUSTRATION.

THE JUNG-FRAU AND THE FALL OF THE RHINE NEAR
 SCHAFFHAUSEN.

THE Virgin Mountain *, wearing like a Queen
 A brilliant crown of everlasting snow,
 Sheds ruin from her sides ; and men below
 Wonder that aught of aspect so serene
 Can link with desolation. Smooth and green,
 And seeming, at a little distance, slow,
 The waters of the Rhine ; but on they go
 Fretting and whitening, keener and more keen ;
 Till madness seizes on the whole wide Flood,
 Turned to a fearful Thing whose nostrils breathe
 Blasts of tempestuous smoke—wherewith he tries
 To hide himself, but only magnifies ;
 And doth in more conspicuous torment writhe,
 Deafening the region in his ireful mood.

XLIV.

TROUBLES OF CHARLES THE FIRST.

EVEN such the contrast that, where'er we move,
 To the mind's eye Religion doth present ;
 Now with her own deep quietness content ;
 Then, like the mountain, thundering from above
 Against the ancient pine-trees of the grove
 And the Land's humblest comforts. Now her
 Recals the transformation of the flood, [mood
 Whose rage the gentle skies in vain reprove,
 Earth cannot check. O terrible excess
 Of headstrong will ! Can this be Piety ?
 No—some fierce Maniac hath usurped her name ;
 And scourges England struggling to be free :
 Her peace destroyed ! her hopes a wilderness !
 Her blessings cursed—her glory turned to shame !

* The Jung-frau.

XLV.

LAUD *.

PREJUDGED by foes determined not to spare,
 An old weak Man for vengeance thrown aside,
 Laud, 'in the painful art of dying' tried,
 (Like a poor bird entangled in a snare
 Whose heart still flutters, though his wings forbear
 To stir in useless struggle) hath relied
 On hope that conscious innocence supplied,
 And in his prison breathes celestial air.
 Why carries then thy chariot ? Wherefore stay,
 O Death ! the ensanguined yet triumphant wheels,
 Which thou prepar'st, full often, to convey
 (What time a State with madding faction reels)
 The Saint or Patriot to the world that heals
 All wounds, all perturbations doth allay ?

XLVI.

AFFLICTIONS OF ENGLAND.

HARP ! could'st thou venture, on thy boldest string
 The faintest note to echo which the blast
 Caught from the hand of Moses as it pass'd
 O'er Sinai's top, or from the Shepherd-king,
 Early awake, by Siloa's brook, to sing
 Of dread Jehovah ; then, should wood and waste
 Hear also of that name, and mercy cast
 Off to the mountains, like a covering
 Of which the Lord was weary. Weep, oh ! weep
 Weep with the good, beholding King and Priest
 Despised by that stern God to whom they raise
 Their suppliant hands ; but holy is the feast
 He keepeth ; like the firmament his ways :
 His statutes like the chambers of the deep.

PART III.

FROM THE RESTORATION TO THE PRESENT TIME.

I.

I SAW the figure of a lovely Maid
 Seated alone beneath a darksome tree,
 Whose fondly-overhanging canopy
 Set off her brightness with a pleasing shade.
 No Spirit was she ; *that* my heart betrayed,
 For she was one I loved exceedingly ;
 But while I gazed in tender reverie
 (Or was it sleep that with my Fancy played ?)
 The bright corporeal presence—form and face—
 Remaining still distinct grew thin and rare,
 Like sunny mist ;—at length the golden hair,
 Shape, limbs, and heavenly features, keeping pace
 Each with the other in a lingering race
 Of dissolution, melted into air.

* See Note.

II.

PATRIOTIC SYMPATHIES.

LAST night, without a voice, that Vision spake
 Fear to my Soul, and sadness which might seem
 Wholly severed from our present theme ;
 Yet, my beloved Country ! I partake
 Of kindred agitations for thy sake ;
 Thou, too, dost visit oft my midnight dream ;
 Thy glory meets me with the earliest beam
 Of light, which tells that Morning is awake.
 If aught impair thy beauty or destroy,
 Or but forebode destruction, I deplore
 With filial love the sad vicissitude ;
 If thou hast fallen, and righteous Heaven restore
 The prostrate, then my spring-time is renewed,
 And sorrow bartered for exceeding joy.

III.

CHARLES THE SECOND.

Who comes—with rapture greeted, and caress'd
 With frantic love—his kingdom to regain ?
 Him Virtue's Nurse, Adversity, in vain
 Received, and fostered in her iron breast :
 For all she taught of hardest and of best,
 Or would have taught, by discipline of pain
 And long privation, now dissolves amain,
 Or is remembered only to give zest
 To wantonness.—Away, Circean revels !
 But for what gain ? if England soon must sink
 Into a gulf which all distinction levels—
 That bigotry may swallow the good name,
 And, with that draught, the life-blood : misery,
 shame,
 By Poets loathed ; from which Historians shrink !

IV.

LATITUDINARIANISM.

YET Truth is keenly sought for, and the wind
 Charged with rich words poured out in thought's
 defence ;
 Whether the Church inspire that eloquence,
 Or a Platonic Piety confined
 To the sole temple of the inward mind ;
 And One there is who builds immortal lays,
 Though doomed to tread in solitary ways,
 Darkness before and danger's voice behind ;
 Yet not alone, nor helpless to repel
 Sad thoughts ; for from above the starry sphere
 Come secrets, whispered nightly to his ear ;
 And the pure spirit of celestial light
 Shines through his soul—' that he may see and tell
 Of things invisible to mortal sight.'

V.

WALTON'S BOOK OF LIVES.

THERE are no colours in the fairest sky
 So fair as these. The feather, whence the pen
 Was shaped that traced the lives of these good men,
 Dropped from an Angel's wing. With moistened eye
 We read of faith and purest charity
 In Statesman, Priest, and humble Citizen :
 O could we copy their mild virtues, then
 What joy to live, what blessedness to die !
 Methinks their very names shine still and bright ;
 Apart—like glow-worms on a summer night ;
 Or lonely tapers when from far they fling
 A guiding ray ; or seen—like stars on high,
 Satellites burning in a lucid ring
 Around meek Walton's heavenly memory.

VI.

CLERICAL INTEGRITY.

NOR shall the eternal roll of praise reject
 Those Unconforming ; whom one rigorous day
 Drives from their Cures, a voluntary prey
 To poverty, and grief, and disrespect,
 And some to want—as if by tempests wrecked
 On a wild coast ; how destitute ! did They
 Feel not that Conscience never can betray,
 That peace of mind is Virtue's sure effect.
 Their altars they forego, their homes they quit,
 Fields which they love, and paths they daily trod,
 And cast the future upon Providence ;
 As men the dictate of whose inward sense
 Outweighs the world ; whom self-deceiving wit
 Lures not from what they deem the cause of God.

VII.

PERSECUTION OF THE SCOTTISH COVENANTERS.

WHEN Alpine Vales threw forth a suppliant cry,
 The majesty of England interposed [closed ;
 And the sword stopped ; the bleeding wounds were
 And Faith preserved her ancient purity.
 How little boots that precedent of good,
 Scorned or forgotten, Thou canst testify,
 For England's shame, O Sister Realm ! from wood,
 Mountain, and moor, and crowded street, where lie
 The headless martyrs of the Covenant,
 Slain by Compatriot-protestants that draw
 From councils senseless as intolerant
 Their warrant. Bodies fall by wild sword-law ;
 But who would force the Soul, tilts with a straw
 Against a Champion cased in adamant.

VIII.

ACQUITTAL OF THE BISHOPS.

A VOICE, from long-expecting thousands sent,
 Shatters the air, and troubles tower and spire ;
 For Justice hath absolved the innocent,
 And Tyranny is balked of her desire :
 Up, down, the busy Thames—rapid as fire
 Coursing a train of gunpowder—it went,
 And transport finds in every street a vent,
 Till the whole City rings like one vast quire.
 The Fathers urge the People to be still, [vain !
 With outstretched hands and earnest speech—in
 Yea, many, haply wont to entertain
 Small reverence for the mitre's offices,
 And to Religion's self no friendly will,
 A Prelate's blessing ask on bended knees.

IX.

WILLIAM THE THIRD.

CALM as an under-current, strong to draw
 Millions of waves into itself, and run,
 From sea to sea, impervious to the sun
 And ploughing storm, the spirit of Nassau
 Swerves not, (how blest if by religious awe
 Swayed, and thereby enabled to contend
 With the wide world's commotions) from its end
 Swerves not—diverted by a casual law.
 Had mortal action e'er a nobler scope ?
 The Hero comes to liberate, not defy ;
 And, while he marches on with stedfast hope,
 Conqueror beloved ! expected anxiously !
 The vacillating Bondman of the Pope
 Shrinks from the verdict of his stedfast eye.

X.

OBLIGATIONS OF CIVIL TO RELIGIOUS LIBERTY.

UNGRATEFUL Country, if thou e'er forget
 The sons who for thy civil rights have bled !
 How, like a Roman, Sidney bowed his head,
 And Russel's milder blood the scaffold wet ;
 But these had fallen for profitless regret
 Had not thy holy Church her champions bred,
 And claims from other worlds inspirited
 The star of Liberty to rise. Nor yet
 (Grave this within thy heart !) if spiritual things
 Be lost, through apathy, or scorn, or fear,
 Shalt thou thy humbler franchises support,
 However hardly won or justly dear :
 What came from heaven to heaven by nature clings,
 And, if dissevered thence, its course is short.

XI.

SACHEVEREL.

A SUDDEN conflict rises from the swell
 Of a proud slavery met by tenets strained
 In Liberty's behalf. Fears, true or feigned,
 Spread through all ranks ; and lo ! the Sentinel
 Who loudest rang his pulpit 'larum bell,
 Stands at the Bar, absolved by female eyes
 Mingling their glances with grave flatteries
 Lavished on *Him*—that England may rebel
 Against her ancient virtue. HIGH and LOW,
 Watch-words of Party, on all tongues are rife ;
 As if a Church, though sprung from heaven, must
 To opposites and fierce extremes her life,— [owe
 Not to the golden mean, and quiet flow
 Of truths that soften hatred, temper strife.

XII.

DOWN a swift Stream, thus far, a bold design
 Have we pursued, with livelier stir of heart
 Than his who sees, borne forward by the Rhine,
 The living landscapes greet him, and depart ;
 Sees spires fast sinking—up again to start !
 And strives the towers to number, that recline
 O'er the dark steeps, or on the horizon line
 Striding with shattered crests his eye athwart.
 So have we hurried on with troubled pleasure :
 Henceforth, as on the bosom of a stream
 That slackens, and spreads wide a watery gleam,
 We, nothing loth a lingering course to measure,
 May gather up our thoughts, and mark at leisure
 How widely spread the interests of our theme.

XIII.

ASPECTS OF CHRISTIANITY IN AMERICA.

I.—THE PILGRIM FATHERS.

WELL worthy to be magnified are they
 Who, with sad hearts, of friends and country took
 A last farewell, their loved abodes forsook,
 And hallowed ground in which their fathers lay ;
 Then to the new-found World explored their way,
 That so a Church, unforced, uncalled to brook
 Ritual restraints, within some sheltering nook
 Her Lord might worship and his word obey
 In freedom. Men they were who could not bend ;
 Blest Pilgrims, surely, as they took for guide
 A will by sovereign Conscience sanctified ;
 Blest while their Spirits from the woods ascend
 Along a Galaxy that knows no end,
 But in His glory who for Sinners died.

XIV.

II. CONTINUED.

FROM Rite and Ordinance abused they fled
To Wilds where both were utterly unknown ;
But not to them had Providence foreshown
What benefits are missed, what evils bred,
In worship neither raised nor limited
Save by Self-will. Lo ! from that distant shore,
For Rite and Ordinance, Piety is led
Back to the Land those Pilgrims left of yore,
Led by her own free choice. So Truth and Love
By Conscience governed do their steps retrace.—
Fathers ! your Virtues, such the power of grace,
Their spirit, in your Children, thus approve.
Transcendent over time, unbound by place,
Concord and Charity in circles move.

XV.

III. CONCLUDED.—AMERICAN EPISCOPACY.

PATRIOTS informed with Apostolic light
Were they, who, when their Country had been freed,
Bowing with reverence to the ancient creed,
Fixed on the frame of England's Church their sight,
And strove in filial love to reunite
What force had severed. Thence they fetched the
seed
Of Christian unity, and won a meed
Of praise from Heaven. To Thee, O saintly WHITE,
Patriarch of a wide-spreading family,
Remotest lands and unborn times shall turn,
Whether they would restore or build—to Thee,
As one who rightly taught how zeal should burn,
As one who drew from out Faith's holiest urn
The purest stream of patient Energy.

XVI.

BISHOPS and Priests, blessed are ye, if deep
As yours above all offices is high)
Deep in your hearts the sense of duty lie ;
Charged as ye are by Christ to feed and keep
From wolves your portion of his chosen sheep :
Labouring as ever in your Master's sight,
Making your hardest task your best delight,
What perfect glory ye in Heaven shall reap !—
But, in the solemn Office which ye sought
And undertook premonished, if unsound
Your practice prove, faithless though but in thought,
Bishops and Priests, think what a gulf profound
Awaits you then, if they were rightly taught
Who framed the Ordinance by your lives disowned !

XVII.

PLACES OF WORSHIP.

As star that shines dependent upon star
Is to the sky while we look up in love ;
As to the deep fair ships which though they move
Seem fixed, to eyes that watch them from afar ;
As to the sandy desert fountains are,
With palm-groves shaded at wide intervals,
Whose fruit around the sun-burnt Native falls
Of roving tired or desultory war—
Such to this British Isle her christian Fanes,
Each linked to each for kindred services ;
Her Spires, her Steeple-towers with glittering vanes
Far-kenned, her Chapels lurking among trees,
Where a few villagers on bended knees
Find solace which a busy world disdains.

XVIII.

PASTORAL CHARACTER.

A GENIAL hearth, a hospitable board,
And a refined rusticity, belong
To the neat mansion, where, his flock among,
The learned Pastor dwells, their watchful Lord.
Though meek and patient as a sheathed sword ;
Though pride's least lurking thought appear a
wrong
To human kind ; though peace be on his tongue,
Gentleness in his heart—can earth afford
Such genuine state, pre-eminence so free,
As when, arrayed in Christ's authority,
He from the pulpit lifts his awful hand ;
Conjures, implores, and labours all he can
For re-subjecting to divine command
The stubborn spirit of rebellious man ?

XIX.

THE LITURGY.

YES, if the intensities of hope and fear
Attract us still, and passionate exercise
Of lofty thoughts, the way before us lies
Distinct with signs, through which in set career,
As through a zodiac, moves the ritual year
Of England's Church ; stupendous mysteries !
Which whoso travels in her bosom eyes,
As he approaches them, with solemn cheer.
Upon that circle traced from sacred story
We only dare to cast a transient glance,
Trusting in hope that Others may advance
With mind intent upon the King of Glory,
From his mild advent till his countenance
Shall dissipate the seas and mountains hoary.

XX.

BAPTISM.

DEAR be the Church, that, watching o'er the needs
Of Infancy, provides a timely shower
Whose virtue changes to a christian Flower
A Growth from sinful Nature's bed of weeds !—
Fittest beneath the sacred roof proceeds
The ministration ; while parental Love
Looks on, and Grace descendeth from above
As the high service pledges now, now pleads.
There, should vain thoughts outspread their wings
To meet the coming hours of festal mirth, [and fly
The tombs—which hear and answer that brief cry,
The Infant's notice of his second birth—
Recal the wandering Soul to sympathy
With what man hopes from Heaven, yet fears from
Earth.

XXI.

SPONSORS.

FATHER ! to God himself we cannot give
A holier name ! then lightly do not bear
Both names conjoined, but of thy spiritual care
Be duly mindful : still more sensitive
Do Thou, in truth a second Mother, strive
Against disheartening custom, that by Thee
Watched, and with love and pious industry
Tended at need, the adopted Plant may thrive
For everlasting bloom. Benign and pure
This Ordinance, whether loss it would supply,
Prevent omission, help deficiency,
Or seek to make assurance doubly sure.
Shame if the consecrated Vow be found
An idle form, the Word an empty sound !

XXII.

CATECHISING.

FROM Little down to Least, in due degree,
Around the Pastor, each in new-wrought vest,
Each with a vernal posy at his breast,
We stood, a trembling, earnest Company !
With low soft murmur, like a distant bee,
Some spake, by thought-perplexing fears betrayed ;
And some a bold unerring answer made :
How fluttered then thy anxious heart for me,
Belovèd Mother ! Thou whose happy hand
Had bound the flowers I wore, with faithful tie :
Sweet flowers ! at whose inaudible command
Her countenance, phantom-like, doth re-appear :
O lost too early for the frequent tear,
And ill requited by this heartfelt sigh !

XXIII.

CONFIRMATION.

THE Young-ones gathered in from hill and dale,
With holiday delight on every brow :
'Tis passed away ; far other thoughts prevail ;
For they are taking the baptismal Vow
Upon their conscious selves ; their own lips speak
The solemn promise. Strongest sinews fail,
And many a blooming, many a lovely, cheek
Under the holy fear of God turns pale ;
While on each head his lawn-robed Servant lays
An apostolic hand, and with prayer seals
The Covenant. The Omnipotent will raise
Their feeble Souls ; and bear with *his* regrets,
Who, looking round the fair assemblage, feels
That ere the Sun goes down their childhood sets

XXIV.

CONFIRMATION CONTINUED.

I SAW a Mother's eye intensely bent
Upon a Maiden trembling as she knelt ;
In and for whom the pious Mother felt
Things that we judge of by a light too faint :
Tell, if ye may, some star-crowned Muse, or Soin
Tell what rushed in, from what she was relieved
Then, when her Child the hallowing touch received
And such vibration through the Mother went
That tears burst forth amain. Did gleams appear
Opened a vision of that blissful place
Where dwells a Sister-child ? And was power given
Part of her lost One's glory back to trace
Even to this Rite ? For thus *She* knelt, and, ere
The summer-leaf had faded, passed to Heaven.

XXV.

SACRAMENT.

By chain yet stronger must the Soul be tied :
One duty more, last stage of this ascent,
Brings to thy food, mysterious Sacrament !
The Offspring, haply at the Parent's side ;
But not till They, with all that do abide
In Heaven, have lifted up their hearts to laud
And magnify the glorious name of God,
Fountain of grace, whose Son for sinners died.
Ye, who have duly weighed the summons, pause
No longer ; ye, whom to the saving rite
The Altar calls ; come early under laws
That can secure for you a path of light
Through gloomiest shade ; put on (nor dread
weight)
Armour divine, and conquer in your cause !

XXVI.

THE MARRIAGE CEREMONY.

THE Vested Priest before the Altar stands ;
 Approach, come gladly, ye prepared, in sight
 Of God and chosen friends, your troth to plight
 With the symbolic ring, and willing hands
 Solemnly joined. Now sanctify the hands
 Father !—to the Espoused thy blessing give,
 That mutually assisted they may live
 Obedient, as here taught, to thy commands.
 Who prays the Church, to consecrate a Vow
 The which would endless matrimony make ;”
 Union that shadows forth and doth partake
 A mystery potent human love to endow [sake ;
 With heavenly, each more prized for the other’s
 Deep not, meek Bride ! uplift thy timid brow.

XXVII.

THANKSGIVING AFTER CHILDBIRTH.

WOMAN ! the Power who left his throne on high,
 And deigned to wear the robe of flesh we wear,
 The Power that thro’ the straits of Infancy
 Did pass dependant on maternal care,
 His own humanity with Thee will share,
 Pleased with the thanks that in his People’s eye
 Thou offertest up for safe Delivery
 From Childbirth’s perilous throes. And should
 The Heir
 Of thy fond hopes hereafter walk inclined
 To courses fit to make a mother rue
 That ever he was born, a glance of mind
 Cast upon this observance may renew
 A better will ; and, in the imagined view
 Of thee thus kneeling, safety he may find.

XXVIII.

VISITATION OF THE SICK.

THE Sabbath bells renew the inviting peal ;
 Had music ! yet there be that, worn with pain
 And sickness, listen where they long have lain,
 In sadness listen. With maternal zeal
 Inspired, the Church sends ministers to kneel
 Beside the afflicted ; to sustain with prayer,
 And soothe the heart confession hath laid bare—
 That pardon, from God’s throne, may set its seal
 On a true Penitent. When breath departs
 From one disburthened so, so comforted,
 His Spirit Angels greet ; and ours be hope
 That, if the Sufferer rise from his sick-bed,
 Hence he will gain a firmer mind, to cope
 With a bad world, and foil the Tempter’s arts.

XXIX.

THE COMMINATION SERVICE.

SHUN not this Rite, neglected, yea abhorred,
 By some of unreflecting mind, as calling
 Man to curse man, (thought monstrous and
 appalling.)
 Go thou and hear the threatenings of the Lord ;
 Listening within his Temple see his sword
 Unsheathed in wrath to strike the offender’s head,
 Thy own, if sorrow for thy sin be dead,
 Guilt unrepented, pardon unimplored.
 Two aspects bears Truth needful for salvation ;
 Who knows not *that* ?—yet would this delicate age
 Look only on the Gospel’s brighter page :
 Let light and dark duly our thoughts employ ;
 So shall the fearful words of Commination
 Yield timely fruit of peace and love and joy.

XXX.

FORMS OF PRAYER AT SEA.

To kneeling Worshippers no earthly floor
 Gives holier invitation than the deck
 Of a storm-shattered Vessel saved from Wreck
 (When all that Man could do avail’d no more)
 By him who raised the Tempest and restrains :
 Happy the crew who this have felt, and pour
 Forth for his mercy, as the Church ordains,
 Solemn thanksgiving. Nor will *they* implore
 In vain who, for a rightful cause, give breath
 To words the Church prescribes aiding the lip
 For the heart’s sake, ere ship with hostile ship
 Encounters, armed for work of pain and death.
 Suppliants ! the God to whom your cause ye trust
 Will listen, and ye know that He is just.

XXXI.

FUNERAL SERVICE.

FROM the Baptismal hour, thro’ weal and woe,
 The Church extends her care to thought and deed ;
 Nor quits the Body when the Soul is freed,
 The mortal weight cast off to be laid low.
 Blest Rite for him who hears in faith, “ I know
 That my Redeemer liveth,”—hears each word
 That follows—striking on some kindred chord
 Deep in the thankful heart ;—yet tears will flow.
 Man is as grass that springeth up at morn,
 Grows green, and is cut down and withereth
 Ere nightfall—truth that well may claim a sigh,
 Its natural echo ; but hope comes reborn
 At Jesu’s bidding. We rejoice, “ O Death
 Where is thy Sting ?—O Grave where is thy Vic-
 tory ? ”

XXXII.

RURAL CEREMONY*.

CLOSING the sacred Book which long has fed
 Our meditations, give we to a day
 Of annual joy one tributary lay ;
 This day, when, forth by rustic music led,
 The village Children, while the sky is red
 With evening lights, advance in long array [gay,
 Through the still church-yard, each with garland
 That, carried sceptre-like, o'ertops the head
 Of the proud Bearer. To the wide church-door,
 Charged with these offerings which their fathers bore
 For decoration in the Papal time,
 The innocent Procession softly moves :—
 The spirit of Laud is pleased in heaven's pure clime,
 And Hooker's voice the spectacle approves !

XXXIII.

REGRETS.

WOULD that our scrupulous Sires had dared to leave
 Less scanty measure of those graceful rites
 And usages, whose due return invites
 A stir of mind too natural to deceive ;
 Giving to Memory help when she would weave
 A crown for Hope !—I dread the boasted lights
 That all too often are but fiery blights,
 Killing the bud o'er which in vain we grieve.
 Go, seek, when Christmas snows discomfort bring,
 The counter Spirit found in some gay church
 Green with fresh holly, every pew a perch
 In which the linnets or the thrush might sing,
 Merry and loud and safe from prying search,
 Strains offered only to the genial Spring.

XXXIV.

MUTABILITY.

FROM low to high doth dissolution climb,
 And sink from high to low, along a scale
 Of awful notes, whose concord shall not fail ;
 A musical but melancholy chime,
 Which they can hear who meddle not with crime,
 Nor avarice, nor over-anxious care.
 Truth fails not ; but her outward forms that bear
 The longest date do melt like frosty rime,
 That in the morning whitened hill and plain
 And is no more ; drop like the tower sublime
 Of yesterday, which royally did wear
 His crown of weeds, but could not even sustain
 Some casual shout that broke the silent air,
 Or the unimaginable touch of Time.

* See Note.

XXXV.

OLD ABBEYS.

MONASTIC Domes ! following my downward way,
 Untouched by due regret I marked your fall !
 Now, ruin, beauty, ancient stillness, all
 Dispose to judgments temperate as we lay
 On our past selves in life's declining day :
 For as, by discipline of Time made wise,
 We learn to tolerate the infirmities
 And faults of others—gently as he may,
 So with our own the mild Instructor deals,
 Teaching us to forget them or forgive.
 Perversely curious, then, for hidden ill
 Why should we break Time's charitable seals !
 Once ye were holy, ye are holy still ;
 Your spirit freely let me drink, and live !

XXXVI.

EMIGRANT FRENCH CLERGY.

EVEN while I speak, the sacred roofs of France
 Are shattered into dust ; and self-exiled
 From altars threatened, levelled, or defiled,
 Wander the Ministers of God, as chance
 Opens a way for life, or consonance
 Of faith invites. More welcome to no land
 The fugitives than to the British strand,
 Where priest and layman with the vigilance
 Of true compassion greet them. Creed and test
 Vanish before the unreserved embrace
 Of catholic humanity :—distrest
 They came,—and, while the moral tempest roars
 Throughout the Country they have left, our shores
 Give to their Faith a fearless resting-place.

XXXVII.

CONGRATULATION.

THUS all things lead to Charity, secured
 By THEM who blessed the soft and happy gale
 That landward urged the great Deliverer's sail,
 Till in the sunny bay his fleet was moored !
 Propitious hour ! had we, like them, endured
 Sore stress of apprehension *, with a mind
 Sickened by injuries, dreading worse designed,
 From month to month trembling and unassured,
 How had we then rejoiced ! But we have felt,
 As a loved substance, their futurity :
 Good, which they dared not hope for, we have seen
 A State whose generous will through earth is dealt
 A State—which, balancing herself between
 Licence and slavish order, dares be free.

* See Note.

XXXVIII.

NEW CHURCHES.

For liberty, and triumphs on the Main,
 And laurelled armies, not to be withstood—
 What serve they? if, on transitory good
 Content, and sedulous of abject gain,
 The State (ah, surely not preserved in vain!)
 Urge to shape due channels which the Flood
 The sacred truth may enter—till it brood
 O'er the wide realm, as o'er the Egyptian plain
 The all-sustaining Nile. No more—the time
 Conscious of her want; through England's
 Bounds,
 In rivalry haste, the wished-for Temples rise!
 Hear their sabbath bells' harmonious chime
 Beat on the breeze—the heavenliest of all sounds
 That vale or hill prolongs or multiplies!

XXXIX.

CHURCH TO BE ERECTED.

Is this the chosen site; the virgin sod,
 Distended from age to age by dewy eve,
 Shall disappear, and grateful earth receive
 The corner-stone from hands that build to God.
 On reverend hawthorns, hardened to the rod
 Of winter storms, yet budding cheerfully;
 Those forest oaks of Druid memory,
 Shall long survive, to shelter the Abode
 Of genuine Faith. Where, haply, 'mid this band
 Of daisies, shepherds sate of yore and wove
 Gay-garlands, there let the holy altar stand
 For kneeling adoration;—while—above,
 In woods, visibly portrayed, the mystic Dove,
 That shall protect from blasphemy the Land.

XL.

CONTINUED.

Thine ear has rung, my spirit sunk subdued,
 Sharing the strong emotion of the crowd,
 When each pale brow to dread hosannas bowed
 While clouds of incense mounting veiled the rood,
 That glimmered like a pine-tree dimly viewed
 Through Alpine vapours. Such appalling rite
 Our Church prepares not, trusting to the might
 Of simple truth with grace divine imbued;
 Yet will we not conceal the precious Cross,
 Like men ashamed: the Sun with his first smile
 Shall greet that symbol crowning the low Pile:
 And the fresh air of incense-breathing morn
 Shall lovingly embrace it; and green moss
 Creep round its arms through centuries unborn.

XLI.

NEW CHURCH-YARD.

THE encircling ground, in native turf arrayed,
 Is now by solemn consecration given
 To social interests, and to favouring Heaven,
 And where the rugged colts their gambols played,
 And wild deer bounded through the forest glade,
 Unchecked as when by merry Outlaw driven,
 Shall hymns of praise resound at morn and even;
 And soon, full soon, the lonely Sexton's spade
 Shall wound the tender sod. Encincture small,
 But infinite its grasp of weal and woe!
 Hopes, fears, in never-ending ebb and flow;—
 The spousal trembling, and the 'dust to dust,'
 The prayers, the contrite struggle, and the trust
 That to the Almighty Father looks through all.

XLII.

CATHEDRALS, ETC.

OPEN your gates, ye everlasting Piles!
 Types of the spiritual Church which God hath reared;
 Not loth we quit the newly-hallowed sward
 And humble altar, 'mid your sumptuous aisles
 To kneel, or thrice your intricate defiles,
 Or down the nave to pace in motion slow;
 Watching, with upward eye, the tall tower grow
 And mount, at every step, with living wiles
 Instinct—to rouse the heart and lead the will
 By a bright ladder to the world above.
 Open your gates, ye Monuments of love
 Divine! thou Lincoln, on thy sovereign hill!
 Thou, stately York! and Ye, whose splendours cheer
 Isis and Cam, to patient Science dear!

XLIII.

INSIDE OF KING'S COLLEGE CHAPEL, CAMBRIDGE.

TAX not the royal Saint with vain expense,
 With ill-matched aims the Architect who planned—
 Albeit labouring for a scanty band
 Of white robed Scholars only—this immense
 And glorious Work of fine intelligence!
 Give all thou canst; high Heaven rejects the lore
 Of nicely-calculated less or more;
 So deemed the man who fashioned for the sense
 These lofty pillars, spread that branching roof
 Self-poised, and scooped into ten thousand cells,
 Where light and shade repose, where music dwells
 Lingering—and wandering on as loth to die;
 Like thoughts whose very sweetness yieldeth proof
 That they were born for immortality.

XLIV.

THE SAME.

WHAT awful perspective ! while from our sight
With gradual stealth the lateral windows hide
Their Portraits, their stone-work glimmers,
dyed

In the soft chequerings of a sleepy light.
Martyr, or King, or sainted Eremite,
Whoe'er ye be, that thus, yourselves unseen,
Imbue your prison-bars with solemn sheen,
Shine on, until ye fade with coming Night !—
But, from the arms of silence—list ! O list !
The music bursteth into second life ;
The notes luxuriate, every stone is kissed
By sound, or ghost of sound, in mazy strife ;
Heart-thrilling strains, that cast, before the eye
Of the devout, a veil of ecstasy !

XLV.

CONTINUED.

THEY dreamt not of a perishable home
Who thus could build. Be mine, in hours of fear
Or grovelling thought, to seek a refuge here ;
Or through the aisles of Westminster to roam ;
Where bubbles burst, and folly's dancing foam
Melts, if it cross the threshold ; where the wreath
Of awe-struck wisdom droops : or let my path
Lead to that younger Pile, whose sky-like dome
Hath typified by reach of daring art
Infinity's embrace ; whose guardian crest,
The silent Cross, among the stars shall spread
As now, when She hath also seen her breast
Filled with mementos, satiate with its part
Of grateful England's overflowing Dead.

XLVI.

EJACULATION.

GLORY to God ! and to the Power who came
In filial duty, clothed with love divine,
That made his human tabernacle shine
Like Ocean burning with purpureal flame ;
Or like the Alpine Mount, that takes its name
From roseate hues, far kenned at morn and even
In hours of peace, or when the storm is driven
Along the nether region's rugged frame !
Earth prompts—Heaven urges ; let us seek it
light,
Studious of that pure intercourse begun
When first our infant brows their lustre won ;
So, like the Mountain, may we grow more bright
From unimpeded commerce with the Sun,
At the approach of all-involving night.

XLVII.

CONCLUSION.

WHY sleeps the future, as a snake enrolled,
Coil within coil, at noon-tide ! For the Word
Yields, if with unpresumptuous faith explored,
Power at whose touch the sluggard shall unfold
His drowsy rings. Look forth !—that Stream
behold,
THAT STREAM upon whose bosom we have passed
Floating at ease while nations have effaced
Nations, and Death has gathered to his fold
Long lines of mighty Kings—look forth, my Son
(Nor in this vision be thou slow to trust)
The living Waters, less and less by guilt
Stained and polluted, brighten as they roll,
Till they have reached the eternal City—built
For the perfected Spirits of the just !

YARROW REVISITED, AND OTHER POEMS,

COMPOSED (TWO EXCEPTED) DURING A TOUR IN SCOTLAND, AND ON THE ENGLISH BORDER,
IN THE AUTUMN OF 1831.

TO

SAMUEL ROGERS, ESQ.,

AS A TESTIMONY OF FRIENDSHIP, AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF INTELLECTUAL OBLIGATIONS,
THESE MEMORIALS ARE AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED.

RYDAL MOUNT, Dec. 11, 1834.

I.

The following Stanzas are a memorial of a day passed with Sir Walter Scott, and other Friends visiting the banks of the Yarrow under his guidance, immediately before his departure from Abbotsford, for Naples.

The title *Yarrow Revisited* will stand in no need of explanation, for Readers acquainted with the Author's previous poems suggested by that celebrated Stream.]

The gallant Youth, who may have gained,
Or seeks, a 'winsome Marrow,'
Was but an Infant in the lap
When first I looked on Yarrow;
Oce more, by Newark's Castle-gate
Long left without a warder,
Blood, looked, listened, and with Thee,
Great Minstrel of the Border!

Have thoughts ruled wide on that sweet day,
Their dignity installing
Gentle bosoms, while sere leaves
Were on the bough, or falling;
At breezes played, and sunshine gleamed—
The forest to embolden;
Diddened the fiery hues, and shot
Transparence through the golden.

For busy thoughts the Stream flowed on
In foamy agitation;
And slept in many a crystal pool
For quiet contemplation:
To public and no private care
The freeborn mind entrhralling,
He made a day of happy hours,
Our happy days recalling.

Brisk Youth appeared, the Morn of youth,
With freaks of graceful folly,—
Life's temperate Noon, her sober Eve,
Her Night not melancholy;
Past, present, future, all appeared
In harmony united,
Like guests that meet, and some from far,
By cordial love invited.

And if, as Yarrow, through the woods
And down the meadow ranging,
Did meet us with unaltered face,
Though we were changed and changing;
If, *then*, some natural shadows spread
Our inward prospect over,
The soul's deep valley was not slow
Its brightness to recover.

Eternal blessings on the Muse,
And her divine enjoyment!
The blameless Muse, who trains her Sons
For hope and calm enjoyment;
Albeit sickness, lingering yet,
Has o'er their pillow brooded;
And Care waylays their steps—a Sprite
Not easily eluded.

For thee, O SCOTT! compelled to change
Green Eildon-hill and Cheviot
For warm Vesuvio's vine-clad slopes;
And leave thy Tweed and Tiviot
For mild Sorrento's breezy waves;
May classic Fancy, linking
With native Fancy her fresh aid,
Preserve thy heart from sinking!

O ! while they minister to thee,
 Each vying with the other,
 May Health return to mellow Age
 With Strength, her venturous brother ;
 And Tiber, and each brook and rill
 Renowned in song and story,
 With unimagined beauty shine,
 Nor lose one ray of glory !

For Thou, upon a hundred streams,
 By tales of love and sorrow,
 Of faithful love, undaunted truth,
 Hast shed the power of Yarrow ;
 And streams unknown, hills yet unseen,
 Wherever they invite Thee,
 At parent Nature's grateful call,
 With gladness must requite Thee.

A gracious welcome shall be thine,
 Such looks of love and honour
 As thy own Yarrow gave to me
 When first I gazed upon her ;
 Beheld what I had feared to see,
 Unwilling to surrender
 Dreams treasured up from early days,
 The holy and the tender.

And what, for this frail world, were all
 That mortals do or suffer,
 Did no responsive harp, no pen,
 Memorial tribute offer ?
 Yea, what were mighty Nature's self ?
 Her features, could they win us,
 Unhelped by the poetic voice
 That hourly speaks within us ?

Nor deem that localised Romance
 Plays false with our affections ;
 Unsanctifies our tears—made sport
 For fanciful dejections :
 Ah, no ! the visions of the past
 Sustain the heart in feeling
 Life as she is—our changeful Life,
 With friends and kindred dealing.

Bear witness, Ye, whose thoughts that day
 In Yarrow's groves were centred ;
 Who through the silent portal arch
 Of mouldering Newark enter'd ;
 And clomb the winding stair that once
 Too timidly was mounted
 By the 'last Minstrel,' (not the last !)
 Ere he his Tale recounted.

Flow on for ever, Yarrow Stream !
 Fulfil thy pensive duty,
 Well pleased that future Bards should chant
 For simple hearts thy beauty ;
 To dream-light dear while yet unseen,
 Dear to the common sunshine,
 And dearer still, as now I feel,
 To memory's shadowy moonshine !

II.

ON THE DEPARTURE OF SIR WALTER SCOTT FROM
 ABBOTSFORD, FOR NAPLES.

A TROUBLE, not of clouds, or weeping rain,
 Nor of the setting sun's pathetic light
 Engendered, hangs o'er Eildon's triple height :
 Spirits of Power, assembled there, complain
 For kindred Power departing from their sight ;
 While Tweed, best pleased in chanting a blith
 strain,
 Saddens his voice again, and yet again.
 Lift up your hearts, ye Mourners ! for the might
 Of the whole world's good wishes with him goes
 Blessings and prayers in nobler retinue
 Than sceptred king or laurelled conqueror know
 Follow this wondrous Potentate. Be true,
 Ye winds of ocean, and the midland sea,
 Wafting your Charge to soft Parthenope !

III.

A PLACE OF BURIAL IN THE SOUTH OF SCOTLAND

PART fenced by man, part by a rugged steep
 That curbs a foaming brook, a Grave-yard lies ;
 The hare's best couching-place for fearless sleep
 Which moonlit elves, far seen by credulous eyes
 Enter in dance. Of church, or sabbath ties,
 No vestige now remains ; yet thither creep
 Bereft Ones, and in lowly anguish weep
 Their prayers out to the wind and naked skies.
 Proud tomb is none ; but rudely-sculptured knight
 By humble choice of plain old times, are seen
 Level with earth, among the hillocks green :
 Union not sad, when sunny daybreak smites
 The spangled turf, and neighbouring thickets ring
 With jubilate from the choirs of spring !

VII.

VII.

VIII.

IX.

EAGLES.

COMPOSED AT DUNOLLIE CASTLE IN THE BAY OF OBAN.

DISHONOUR'D Rock and Ruin ! that, by law
Tyrannic, keep the Bird of Jove embarr'd
Like a lone criminal whose life is spared.
Vexed is he, and screams loud. The last I saw
Was on the wing ; stooping, he struck with awe
Man, bird, and beast ; then, with a consort paired,
From a bold headland, their loved aery's guard,
Flew high above Atlantic waves, to draw
Light from the fountain of the setting sun.
Such was this Prisoner once ; and, when his plumes
The sea-blast ruffles as the storm comes on,
Then, for a moment, he, in spirit, resumes
His rank 'mong freeborn creatures that live free,
His power, his beauty, and his majesty.

X.

IN THE SOUND OF MULL.

TRADITION, be thou mute ! Oblivion, throw
Thy veil in mercy o'er the records, hung
Round strath and mountain, stamped by the ancient
On rock and ruin darkening as we go,— [tongue
Spots where a word, ghost-like, survives to show
What crimes from hate, or desperate love, have
sprung ;

From honour misconceived, or fancied wrong,
What feuds, not quenched but fed by mutual woe.
Yet, though a wild vindictive Race, untamed
By civil arts and labours of the pen,
Could gentleness be scorned by those fierce Men,
Who, to spread wide the reverence they claimed
For patriarchal occupations, named
Yon towering Peaks, 'Shepherds of Etive Glen* ?'

XI.

SUGGESTED AT TYNDRUM IN A STORM.

ENOUGH of garlands, of the Arcadian crook,
And all that Greece and Italy have sung
Of Swains reposing myrtle groves among !
Ours couch on naked rocks,—will cross a brook
Sworn with chill rains, nor ever cast a look
This way or that, or give it even a thought
More than by smoothest pathway may be brought
Into a vacant mind. Can written book
Teach what *they* learn ? Up, hardy Mountaineer !
And guide the Bard, ambitious to be One
Of Nature's privy council, as thou art,
On cloud-sequestered heights, that see and hear
To what dread Powers He delegates his part
On earth, who works in the heaven of heavens,
alone.

XII.

THE EARL OF BREADALBANE'S RUINED MANSION,
AND FAMILY BURIAL-PLACE, NEAR KILLIN.

WELL sang the Bard who called the grave, in strains
Thoughtful and sad, the 'narrow house.' No style
Of fond sepulchral flattery can beguile
Grief of her sting ; nor cheat, where he detains
The sleeping dust, stern Death. How reconcile
With truth, or with each other, decked remains
Of a once warm Abode, and that *new* Pile,
For the departed, built with curious pains
And mausolean pomp ? Yet here they stand
Together,—mid trim walks and artful bowers,
To be looked down upon by ancient hills,
That, for the living and the dead, demand
And prompt a harmony of genuine powers ;
Concord that elevates the mind, and stills.

* In Gaelic, *Buachaill Eile*.

XIII.

'REST AND BE THANKFUL !'

AT THE HEAD OF GLENCROE.

DOUBLING and doubling with laborious walk,
Who, that has gained at length the wished-for
Height,
This brief this simple way-side Call can slight,
And rests not thankful ? Whether cheered by tall
With some loved friend, or by the unseen hawk
Whistling to clouds and sky-born streams, that shin
At the sun's outbreath, as with light divine,
Ere they descend to nourish root and stalk
Of valley flowers. Nor, while the limbs repose,
Will we forget that, as the fowl can keep
Absolute stillness, poised aloft in air,
And fishes front, unmoved, the torrent's sweep,
So may the Soul, through powers that Faith bestow
Win rest, and ease, and peace, with bliss th
Angels share.

XIV.

HIGHLAND HUT.

SEE what gay wild flowers deck this earth-built Co
Whose smoke, forth-issuing whence and how it ma
Shines in the greeting of the sun's first ray
Like wreaths of vapour without stain or blot.
The limpid mountain rill avoids it not ;
And why shouldst thou ?—If rightly trained and bre
Humanity is humble, finds no spot
Which her Heaven-guided feet refuse to tread.
The walls are cracked, sunk is the flowery roof,
Undressed the pathway leading to the door ;
But love, as Nature loves, the lonely Poor ;
Search, for their worth, some gentle heart wron
proof,
Meek, patient, kind, and, were its trials fewer,
Belike less happy.—Stand no more aloof* !

XV.

THE HIGHLAND BROACH.

The exact resemblance which the old Broach (still in
though rarely met with, among the Highlanders) bear
the Roman Fibula must strike every one, and com
with the plaid and kilt, to recal to mind the commu
cation which the ancient Romans had with this rem
country.

If to Tradition faith be due,
And echoes from old verse speak true,

* See Note.

Ere the meek Saint, Columba, bore
 Glad tidings to Iona's shore,
 No common light of nature blessed
 The mountain region of the west,
 A land where gentle manners ruled
 O'er men in dauntless virtues schooled,
 That raised, for centuries, a bar
 Impervious to the tide of war :
 Yet peaceful Arts did entrance gain
 Where haughty Force had striven in vain ;
 And, 'mid the works of skilful hands,
 By wanderers brought from foreign lands
 And various climes, was not unknown
 The clasp that fixed the Roman Gown ;
 The Fibula, whose shape, I ween,
 Still in the Highland Broach is seen,
 The silver Broach of massy frame,
 Worn at the breast of some grave Dame
 On road or path, or at the door
 Of fern-thatched hut on heathy moor :
 But delicate of yore its mould,
 And the material finest gold ;
 As might besem the fairest Fair,
 Whether she graced a royal chair,
 Or shed, within a vaulted hall,
 No fancied lustre on the wall
 Where shields of mighty heroes hung,
 While Fingal heard what Ossian sung.

The heroic Age expired—it slept
 Deep in its tomb :—the bramble crept
 O'er Fingal's hearth ; the grassy sod
 Grew on the floors his sons had trod :
 Malvina ! where art thou ? Their state
 The noblest-born must abdicate ;
 The fairest, while with fire and sword
 Come Spoilers—horde impelling horde,
 Must walk the sorrowing mountains, drest
 By ruder hands in homelier vest.
 Yet still the female bosom lent,
 And loved to borrow, ornament ;
 Still was its inner world a place
 Reached by the dews of heavenly grace ;
 Still pity to this last retreat
 Clove fondly ; to his favourite seat
 Love wound his way by soft approach,
 Beneath a massier Highland Broach.

When alternations came of rage
 Yet fiercer, in a darker age ;
 And feuds, where, clan encountering clan,
 The weaker perished to a man ;
 For maid and mother, when despair
 Might else have triumphed, baffling prayer,

One small possession lacked not power,
 Provided in a calmer hour,
 To meet such need as might befall—
 Roof, raiment, bread, or burial :
 For woman, even of tears bereft,
 The hidden silver Broach was left.

As generations come and go
 Their arts, their customs, ebb and flow ;
 Fate, fortune, sweep strong powers away,
 And feeble, of themselves, decay ;
 What poor abodes the heir-loom hide,
 In which the castle once took pride !
 Tokens, once kept as boasted wealth,
 If saved at all, are saved by stealth.
 Lo ! ships, from seas by nature barred,
 Mount along ways by man prepared ;
 And in far-stretching vales, whose streams
 Seek other seas, their canvass gleams.
 Lo ! busy towns spring up, on coasts
 Thronged yesterday by airy ghosts ;
 Soon, like a lingering star forlorn
 Among the novelties of morn,
 While young delights on old encroach,
 Will vanish the last Highland Broach.

But when, from out their viewless bed,
 Like vapours, years have rolled and spread ;
 And this poor verse, and worthier lays,
 Shall yield no light of love or praise ;
 Then, by the spade, or cleaving plough,
 Or torrent from the mountain's brow,
 Or whirlwind, reckless what his might
 Entombs, or forces into light ;
 Blind Chance, a volunteer ally,
 That oft befriends Antiquity,
 And clears Oblivion from reproach,
 May render back the Highland Broach*.

* How much the Broach is sometimes prized by persons in humble stations may be gathered from an occurrence mentioned to me by a female friend. She had had an opportunity of benefiting a poor old woman in her own hut, who, wishing to make a return, said to her daughter, in Erse, in a tone of plaintive earnestness, "I would give anything I have, but I *hope* she does not wish for my Broach !" and, uttering these words, she put her hand upon the Broach which fastened her kerchief, and which, she imagined, had attracted the eye of her benefactress.

XVI.

THE BROWNIE.

Upon a small island not far from the head of Loch Lomond, are some remains of an ancient building, which was for several years the abode of a solitary Individual, one of the last survivors of the clan of Macfarlane, once powerful in that neighbourhood. Passing along the shore opposite this island in the year 1814, the Author learned these particulars, and that this person then living there had acquired the appellation of 'The Brownie.' See "The Brownie's Cell," p. 231, to which the following is a sequel.

'How disappeared he?' Ask the newt and toad ;
Ask of his fellow men, and they will tell
How he was found, cold as an icicle,
Under an arch of that forlorn abode ;
Where he, unpropp'd, and by the gathering flood
Of years hemm'd round, had dwelt, prepared to try
Privation's worst extremities, and die
With no one near save the omnipresent God.
Verily so to live was an awful choice—
A choice that wears the aspect of a doom ;
But in the mould of mercy all is cast
For Souls familiar with the eternal Voice ;
And this forgotten Taper to the last
Drove from itself, we trust, all frightful gloom.

XVII.

TO THE PLANET VENUS, AN EVENING STAR.

COMPOSED AT LOCH LOMOND.

THOUGH joy attend Thee orient at the birth
Of dawn, it cheers the lofty spirit most
To watch thy course when Day-light, fled from earth,
In the grey sky hath left his lingering Ghost,
Perplexed as if between a splendour lost
And splendour slowly mustering. Since the Sun,
The absolute, the world-absorbing One,
Relinquished half his empire to the host
Emboldened by thy guidance, holy Star,
Holy as princely, who that looks on thee
Touching, as now, in thy humility
The mountain borders of this seat of care,
Can question that thy countenance is bright,
Celestial Power, as much with love as light?

XVIII.

BOTHWELL CASTLE.

(PASSED UNSEEN, ON ACCOUNT OF STORMY WEATHER.)

IMMURED in Bothwell's towers, at times the Brave
(So beautiful is Clyde) forgot to mourn
The liberty they lost at Bannockburn.
Once on those steeps *I* roamed at large, and have

In mind the landscape, as if still in sight ;
The river glides, the woods before me wave ;
Then why repine that now in vain I crave
Needless renewal of an old delight ?
Better to thank a dear and long-past day
For joy its sunny hours were free to give
Than blame the present, that our wish hath crossed.
Memory, like sleep, hath powers which dreams
obey,
Dreams, vivid dreams, that are not fugitive :
How little that she cherishes is lost !

XIX.

PICTURE OF DANIEL IN THE LION'S DEN, AT
HAMILTON PALACE.

AMID a fertile region green with wood
And fresh with rivers, well did it become
The ducal Owner, in his palace-home
To naturalise this tawny Lion brood ;
Children of Art, that claim strange brotherhood
(Couched in their den) with those that roam at large
Over the burning wilderness, and charge
The wind with terror while they roar for food.
Sate are *these* ; and stilled to eye and ear ;
Hence, while we gaze, a more enduring fear !
Yet is the Prophet calm, nor would the cave
Daunt him—if his Companions, now be-drowsed
Outstretched and listless, were by hunger roused
Man placed him here, and God, he knows, can save

XX.

THE AVON.

(A FEEDER OF THE ANNAN.)

AVON—a precious, an immortal name !
Yet is it one that other rivulets bear
Like this unheard-of, and their channels wear
Like this contented, though unknown to Fame :
For great and sacred is the modest claim
Of Streams to Nature's love, where'er they flow
And ne'er did Genius slight them, as they go,
Tree, flower, and green herb, feeding without blame
But Praise can waste her voice on work of tears,
Anguish, and death : full oft where innocent blood
Has mixed its current with the limpid flood,
Her heaven-offending trophies Glory rears :
Never for like distinction may the good
Shrink from *thy* name, pure Rill, with unpleasant
ears.

XXI.

SUGGESTED BY A VIEW FROM AN EMINENCE IN
INGLEWOOD FOREST.

HE forest huge of ancient Caledon
Is but a name, no more is Inglewood,
That swept from hill to hill, from flood to flood :
In her last thorn the nightly moon has shone ;
Yet still, though inappropriate Wild be none,
Airparksspread wide where Adam Bell might deign
With Clym o' the Clough, were they alive again,
To kill for merry feast their venison.
Or wants the holy Abbot's gliding Shade
His church with monumental wreck bestrown ;
The feudal Warrior-chief, a Ghost unlaid,
Lath still his castle, though a skeleton,
That he may watch by night, and lessons con-
fer power that perishes, and rights that fade.

XXII.

HART'S-HORN TREE, NEAR PENRITH.

HERE stood an Oak, that long had borne affixed
To his huge trunk, or, with more subtle art,
Among its withering topmost branches mixed,
The palmy antlers of a hunted Hart,
Whom the Dog Hercules pursued—his part
Each desperately sustaining, till at last
Both sank and died, the life-veins of the chased
And chaser bursting here with one dire smart.
Mutual the victory, mutual the defeat !
High was the trophy hung with pitiless pride ;
Ay, rather, with that generous sympathy
That wants not, even in rudest breasts, a seat ;
And, for this feeling's sake, let no one chide
Verse that would guard thy memory, HART'S-HORN
TREE* !

XXIII.

FANCY AND TRADITION.

THE Lovers took within this ancient grove
Their last embrace ; beside those crystal springs
The Hermit saw the Angel spread his wings
For instant flight ; the Sage in yon alcove
Late musing ; on that hill the Bard would rove,
Not mute, where now the linnet only sings :
Thus every where to truth Tradition clings,
Or Fancy localises Powers we love.
Were only History licensed to take note
Of things gone by, her meagre monuments
Would ill suffice for persons and events :
There is an ampler page for man to quote,
A readier book of manifold contents,
Studied alike in palace and in cot.

* See Note.

XXIV.

COUNTESS' PILLAR.

[On the roadside between Penrith and Appleby, there stands a pillar with the following inscription :—

'This pillar was erected, in the year 1656, by Anne Countess Dowager of Pembroke, &c. for a memorial of her last parting with her pious mother, Margaret Countess Dowager of Cumberland, on the 2d of April, 1616 ; in memory whereof she hath left an annuity of 4*l.* to be distributed to the poor of the parish of Brougham, every 2d day of April for ever, upon the stone table placed hard by. Laus Deo !']

WHILE the Poor gather round, till the end of time
May this bright flower of Charity display
Its bloom, unfolding at the appointed day ;
Flower than the loveliest of the vernal prime
Lovelier—transplanted from heaven's purest clime !
'Charity never faileth : ' on that creed,
More than on written testament or deed,
The pious Lady built with hope sublime.
Alms on this stone to be dealt out, *for ever !*
'LAUS DEO.' Many a Stranger passing by
Has with that Parting mixed a filial sigh,
Blest its humane Memorial's fond endeavour ;
And, fastening on those lines an eye tear-glazed,
Has ended, though no Clerk, with 'God be praised !'

XXV.

ROMAN ANTIQUITIES.

(FROM THE ROMAN STATION AT OLD PENRITH.)

How profitless the relics that we cull,
Troubling the last holds of ambitious Rome,
Unless they chasten fancies that presume
Too high, or idle agitations hurl !
Of the world's flatteries if the brain be full,
To have no seat for thought were better doom,
Like this old helmet, or the eyeless skull
Of him who gloried in its nodding plume.
Heaven out of view, our wishes what are they ?
Our fond regrets tenacious in their grasp ?
The Sage's theory ? the Poet's lay ?—
Mere Fibulæ without a robe to clasp ;
Obsolete lamps, whose light no time recalls ;
Urns without ashes, tearless lacrymals !

XXVI.

APOLOGY,

FOR THE FOREGOING POEMS.

No more : the end is sudden and abrupt,
Abrupt—as without preconceived design
Was the beginning ; yet the several Lays
Have moved in order, to each other bound

By a continuous and acknowledged tie
 Though unapparent—like those Shapes distinct
 That yet survive ensculptured on the walls
 Of palaces, or temples, 'mid the wreck
 Of famed Persepolis; each following each,
 As might beseem a stately embassy,
 In set array; these bearing in their hands
 Ensign of civil power, weapon of war,
 Or gift to be presented at the throne
 Of the Great King; and others, as they go
 In priestly vest, with holy offerings charged,
 Or leading victims drest for sacrifice.
 Nor will the Power we serve, that sacred Power,
 The Spirit of humanity, disdain
 A ministration humble but sincere,
 That from a threshold loved by every Muse
 Its impulse took—that sorrow-stricken door,

Whence, as a current from its fountain-head,
 Our thoughts have issued, and our feelings flowed,
 Receiving, willingly or not, fresh strength
 From kindred sources; while around us sighed
 (Life's three first seasons having passed away)
 Leaf-scattering winds; and hoar-frost sprinklings
 fell

(Foretaste of winter) on the moorland heights;
 And every day brought with it tidings new
 Of rash change, ominous for the public weal.
 Hence, if dejection has too oft encroached
 Upon that sweet and tender melancholy
 Which may itself be cherished and caressed
 More than enough; a fault so natural
 (Even with the young, the hopeful, or the gay)
 For prompt forgiveness will not sue in vain.

EVENING VOLUNTARIES.

I.

CALM is the fragrant air, and loth to lose
 Day's grateful warmth, tho' moist with falling dews.
 Look for the stars, you'll say that there are none;
 Look up a second time, and, one by one,
 You mark them twinkling out with silvery light,
 And wonder how they could elude the sight!
 The birds, of late so noisy in their bowers,
 Warbled a while with faint and fainter powers,
 But now are silent as the dim-seen flowers:
 Nor does the village Church-clock's iron tone
 The time's and season's influence disown;
 Nine beats distinctly to each other bound
 In drowsy sequence—how unlike the sound
 That, in rough winter, oft inflicts a fear
 On fireside listeners, doubting what they hear!
 The shepherd, bent on rising with the sun,
 Had closed his door before the day was done,
 And now with thankful heart to bed doth creep,
 And joins his little children in their sleep.
 The bat, lured forth where trees the lane o'ershade,
 Flits and reflits along the close arcade;
 The busy dor-hawk chases the white moth
 With burring note, which Industry and Sloth
 Might both be pleased with, for it suits them both.
 A stream is heard—I see it not, but know
 By its soft music whence the waters flow:

Wheels and the tread of hoofs are heard no more;
 One boat there was, but it will touch the shore
 With the next dipping of its slackened oar;
 Faint sound, that, for the gayest of the gay,
 Might give to serious thought a moment's sway,
 As a last token of man's toilsome day!

1831

II.

ON A HIGH PART OF THE COAST OF CUMBERLAND.

Easter Sunday, April 7.

THE AUTHOR'S SIXTY-THIRD BIRTH-DAY.

THE Sun, that seemed so mildly to retire,
 Flung back from distant climes a streaming fire,
 Whose blaze is now subdued to tender gleams,
 Prelude of night's approach with soothing dreams.
 Look round;—of all the clouds not one is moving;
 'Tis the still hour of thinking, feeling, loving.
 Silent, and stedfast as the vaulted sky,
 The boundless plain of waters seems to lie:—
 Comes that low sound from breezes rustling o'er
 The grass-crowned headland that conceals the
 shore?
 No; 'tis the earth-voice of the mighty sea,
 Whispering how meek and gentle he can be!

Thou Power supreme ! who, arming to rebuke
 Genders, dost put off the gracious look,
 And clothe thyself with terrors like the flood
 Ocean roused into his fiercest mood,
 Whatever discipline thy Will ordain
 In the brief course that must for me remain ;
 Teach me with quick-eared spirit to rejoice
 In admonitions of thy softest voice !
 Whatever the path these mortal feet may trace,
 Breathe through my soul the blessing of thy grace,
 And, through a perfect love, a faith sincere
 Drawn from the wisdom that begins with fear,
 Lead to expand ; and, for a season, free
 From finite cares, to rest absorbed in Thee !

1833.

III.

(BY THE SEA-SIDE.)

The sun is couched, the sea-fowl gone to rest,
 And the wild storm hath somewhere found a nest ;
 All slumbers—wave with wave no longer strives,
 Only a heaving of the deep survives,
 All tale motion ! soon will it be laid,
 And by the tide alone the water swayed.
 Salty withdrawals, interminglings mild
 Ought with shade in beauty reconciled—
 Such is the prospect far as sight can range,
 To soothing recompence, the welcome change.
 Where now the ships that drove before the blast,
 Threatened by angry breakers as they passed ;
 And by a train of flying clouds bemocked ;
 Or in the hollow surge, at anchor rocked
 Upon a bed of death ? Some lodge in peace,
 Protected by His care who bade the tempest cease ;
 And some, too heedless of past danger, court
 Fresh gales to waft them to the far-off port ;
 Or near, or hanging sea and sky between,
 Not one of all those winged powers is seen,
 Not in her course, nor 'mid this quiet heard ;
 But oh ! how gladly would the air be stirred
 By some acknowledgment of thanks and praise,
 As in its temper as those vesper lays
 Sing to the Virgin while accordant oars
 Breeze the slow bark along Calabrian shores ;
 Or sea-born service through the mountains felt
 Had into one loved vision all things melt :
 Like those hymns that soothe with graver sound
 The gulfy coast of Norway iron-bound ;
 And, from the wide and open Baltic, rise
 With punctual care, Lutheran harmonies.
 Hush, not a voice is here ! but why repine,
 How when the star of eve comes forth to shine

On British waters with that look benign !
 Ye mariners, that plough your onward way,
 Or in the haven rest, or sheltering bay,
 May silent thanks at least to God be given
 With a full heart ; ' our thoughts are heard in
 heaven !'

1833.

IV.

Nor in the lucid intervals of life
 That come but as a curse to party-strife ;
 Not in some hour when Pleasure with a sigh
 Of languor puts his rosy garland by ;
 Not in the breathing-times of that poor slave
 Who daily piles up wealth in Mammon's cave—
 Is Nature felt, or can be ; nor do words,
 Which practised talent readily affords,
 Prove that her hand has touched responsive chords ;
 Nor has her gentle beauty power to move
 With genuine rapture and with fervent love
 The soul of Genius, if he dare to take
 Life's rule from passion craved for passion's sake ;
 Untaught that meekness is the cherished bent
 Of all the truly great and all the innocent.

But who *is* innocent ? By grace divine,
 Not otherwise, O Nature ! we are thine,
 Through good and evil thine, in just degree
 Of rational and manly sympathy.
 To all that Earth from pensive hearts is stealing,
 And Heaven is now to gladdened eyes revealing,
 Add every charm the Universe can show
 Through every change its aspects undergo—
 Care may be respited, but not repealed ;
 No perfect cure grows on that bounded field.
 Vain is the pleasure, a false calm the peace,
 If He, through whom alone our conflicts cease,
 Our virtuous hopes without relapse advance,
 Come not to speed the Soul's deliverance ;
 To the distempered Intellect refuse
 His gracious help, or give what we abuse.

1834.

V.

(BY THE SIDE OF RYDAL MERE.)

The linnet's warble, sinking towards a close,
 Hints to the thrush 'tis time for their repose ;
 The shrill-voiced thrush is heedless, and again
 The monitor revives his own sweet strain ;
 But both will soon be mastered, and the copse
 Be left as silent as the mountain-tops,

Ere some commanding star dismiss to rest
 The throng of rooks, that now, from twig or nest,
 (After a steady flight on home-bound wings,
 And a last game of mazy hoverings
 Around their ancient grove) with cawing noise
 Disturb the liquid music's equipoise.

O Nightingale ! * Who ever heard thy song
 Might here be moved, till Fancy grows so strong
 That listening sense is pardonably cheated
 Where wood or stream by thee was never greeted.
 Surely, from fairest spots of favoured lands,
 Were not some gifts withheld by jealous hands,
 This hour of deepening darkness here would be
 As a fresh morning for new harmony ;
 And lays as prompt would hail the dawn of Night :
 A *dawn* she has both beautiful and bright,
 When the East kindles with the full moon's light ;
 Not like the rising sun's impatient glow
 Dazzling the mountains, but an overflow
 Of solemn splendour, in mutation slow.

Wanderer by spring with gradual progress led,
 For sway profoundly felt as widely spread ;
 To king, to peasant, to rough sailor, dear,
 And to the soldier's trumpet-wearied ear ;
 How welcome wouldst thou be to this green Vale
 Fairer than Tempe ! Yet, sweet Nightingale !
 From the warm breeze that bears thee on, alight
 At will, and stay thy migratory flight ;
 Build, at thy choice, or sing, by pool or fount,
 Who shall complain, or call thee to account ?
 The wisest, happiest, of our kind are they
 That ever walk content with Nature's way,
 God's goodness—measuring bounty as it may ;
 For whom the gravest thought of what they miss,
 Chastening the fulness of a present bliss,
 Is with that wholesome office satisfied,
 While unrepining sadness is allied
 In thankful bosoms to a modest pride.

1834.

VI.

SOFT as a cloud is yon blue Ridge—the Mere
 Seems firm as solid crystal, breathless, clear,
 And motionless ; and, to the gazer's eye,
 Deeper than ocean, in the immensity
 Of its vague mountains and unreal sky !
 But, from the process in that still retreat,
 Turn to minuter changes at our feet ;
 Observe how dewy Twilight has withdrawn
 The crowd of daisies from the shaven lawn,

And has restored to view its tender green,
 That, while the sun rode high, was lost beneath
 their dazzling sheen.

—An emblem this of what the sober Hour
 Can do for minds disposed to feel its power !
 Thus oft, when we in vain have wish'd away
 The petty pleasures of the garish day,
 Meek eve shuts up the whole usurping host
 (Unbashful dwarfs each glittering at his post)
 And leaves the disencumbered spirit free
 To reassume a staid simplicity.

'Tis well—but what are helps of time and place,
 When wisdom stands in need of nature's grace ;
 Why do good thoughts, invoked or not, descend,
 Like Angels from their bowers, our virtues to be-
 friend ;

If yet To-morrow, unbelied, may say,
 "I come to open out, for fresh display,
 The elastic vanities of yesterday ?"

1834.

VII.

THE leaves that rustled on this oak-crowned hill,
 And sky that danced among those leaves, are still ;
 Rest smooths the way for sleep ; in field and bower
 Soft shades and dews have shed their blended
 power

On drooping eyelid and the closing flower ;
 Sound is there none at which the faintest heart
 Might leap, the weakest nerve of superstition start ;
 Save when the Owl's unexpected scream
 Pierces the ethereal vault ; and (mid the gleam
 Of unsubstantial imagery, the dream,
 From the hushed vale's realities, transferred
 To the still lake) the imaginative Bird
 Seems, 'mid inverted mountains, not unheard.

Grave Creature !—whether, while the moon
 shines bright

On thy wings opened wide for smoothest flight,
 Thou art discovered in a roofless tower,
 Rising from what may once have been a lady's
 bower ;

Or spied where thou sitt'st moping in thy mew
 At the dim centre of a churchyard yew ;
 Or, from a rifted crag or ivy tod
 Deep in a forest, thy secure abode,
 Thou giv'st, for pastime's sake, by shriek or shout,
 A puzzling notice of thy whereabouts—
 May the night never come, nor day be seen,
 When I shall scorn thy voice or mock thy mien !

In classic ages men perceived a soul
 Of sapience in thy aspect, headless Owl !
 The Athens revered in the studious grove ;
 And, near the golden sceptre grasped by Jove,
 His Eagle's favourite perch, while round him sate
 The Gods revolving the decrees of Fate,
 Thou, too, wert present at Minerva's side :—
 Mark to that second larum !—far and wide
 The elements have heard, and rock and cave replied.

1834.

VIII.

This *Impromptu* appeared, many years ago, among the
 Author's poems, from which, in subsequent editions, it
 was excluded. It is reprinted, at the request of the
 friend in whose presence the lines were thrown off.]

THE sun has long been set,

The stars are out by twos and threes,

The little birds are piping yet

Among the bushes and trees ;

There's a cuckoo, and one or two thrushes,

And a far-off wind that rushes,

And a sound of water that gushes,

And the cuckoo's sovereign cry

Fills all the hollow of the sky.

Who would 'go parading'

In London, 'and masquerading,'

On such a night of June

With that beautiful soft half-moon,

And all these innocent blisses ?

On such a night as this is !

1804.

IX.

COMPOSED UPON AN EVENING OF EXTRAORDINARY
 SPLENDOUR AND BEAUTY.

I.

When this effulgence disappeared
 With flying haste, I might have sent,
 Along the speechless clouds, a look
 Of blank astonishment ;
 'Tis endued with power to stay,
 And sanctify one closing day,
 That frail Mortality may see—
 What is ?—ah no, but what *can* be !
 The time was when field and watery cove
 With modulated echoes rang,
 While choirs of fervent Angels sang
 Their vespers in the grove ;

Or, crowning, star-like, each some sovereign height,
 Warbled, for heaven above and earth below,
 Strains suitable to both.—Such holy rite,
 Methinks, if audibly repeated now
 From hill or valley, could not move
 Sublimier transport, purer love,
 Than doth this silent spectacle—the gleam—
 The shadow—and the peace supreme !

II.

No sound is uttered,—but a deep
 And solemn harmony pervades
 The hollow vale from steep to steep,
 And penetrates the glades.
 Far-distant images draw nigh,
 Called forth by wondrous potency
 Of beamy radiance, that imbues,
 Whate'er it strikes, with gem-like hues !
 In vision exquisitely clear,
 Herds range along the mountain side ;
 And glistening antlers are descried ;
 And gilded flocks appear.
 Thine is the tranquil hour, purpureal Eve !
 But long as god-like wish, or hope divine,
 Informs my spirit, ne'er can I believe
 That this magnificence is wholly thine !
 —From worlds not quickened by the sun
 A portion of the gift is won ;
 An intermingling of Heaven's pomp is spread
 On ground which British shepherds tread !

III.

And, if there be whom broken ties
 Afflict, or injuries assail,
 Yon hazy ridges to their eyes
 Present a glorious scale,
 Climbing suffused with sunny air,
 To stop—no record hath told where !
 And tempting Fancy to ascend,
 And with immortal Spirits blend !
 —Wings at my shoulders seem to play ;
 But, rooted here, I stand and gaze
 On those bright steps that heaven-ward raise
 Their practicable way.
 Come forth, ye drooping old men, look abroad,
 And see to what fair countries ye are bound !
 And if some traveller, weary of his road,
 Hath slept since noon-tide on the grassy ground,
 Ye Genii ! to his covert speed ;
 And wake him with such gentle heed
 As may attune his soul to meet the dower
 Bestowed on this transcendent hour !

IV.

Such hues from their celestial Urn
 Were wont to stream before mine eye,
 Where'er it wandered in the morn
 Of blissful infancy.
 This glimpse of glory, why renewed?
 Nay, rather speak with gratitude;
 For, if a vestige of those gleams
 Survived, 'twas only in my dreams.
 Dread Power! whom peace and calmness serve
 No less than Nature's threatening voice,
 If aught unworthy be my choice,
 From THEE if I would swerve;
 Oh, let thy grace remind me of the light
 Full early lost, and fruitlessly deplored;
 Which, at this moment, on my waking sight
 Appears to shine, by miracle restored;
 My soul, though yet confined to earth,
 Rejoices in a second birth!
 —'Tis past, the visionary splendour fades;
 And night approaches with her shades.

1818.

Note.—The multiplication of mountain-ridges, described at the commencement of the third Stanza of this Ode, as a kind of Jacob's Ladder, leading to Heaven, is produced either by watery vapours, or sunny haze;—in the present instance by the latter cause. Allusions to the Ode, entitled 'Intimations of Immortality,' pervade the last stanza of the foregoing Poem.

X.

COMPOSED BY THE SEA-SHORE.

WHAT mischief cleaves to unsubdued regret,
 How fancy sickens by vague hopes beset;
 How baffled projects on the spirit prey,
 And fruitless wishes eat the heart away,
 The Sailor knows; he best, whose lot is cast
 On the relentless sea that holds him fast
 On chance dependent, and the fickle star
 Of power, through long and melancholy war.
 O sad it is, in sight of foreign shores,
 Daily to think on old familiar doors,
 Hearths loved in childhood, and ancestral floors;
 Or, tossed about along a waste of foam,
 To ruminate on that delightful home
 Which with the dear Betrothèd *was* to come;
 Or came and was and is, yet meets the eye
 Never but in the world of memory;
 Or in a dream recalled, whose smoothest range
 Is crossed by knowledge, or by dread, of change,

And if not so, whose perfect joy makes sleep
 A thing too bright for breathing man to keep.
 Hail to the virtues which that perilous life
 Extracts from Nature's elemental strife;
 And welcome glory won in battles fought
 As bravely as the foe was keenly sought.
 But to each gallant Captain and his crew
 A less imperious sympathy is due,
 Such as my verse now yields, while moonbeams play
 On the mute sea in this unruffled bay;
 Such as will promptly flow from every breast,
 Where good men, disappointed in the quest
 Of wealth and power and honours, long for rest;
 Or, having known the splendours of success,
 Sigh for the obscurities of happiness.

XI.

THE Crescent-moon, the Star of Love,
 Glories of evening, as ye there are seen
 With but a span of sky between—
 Speak one of you, my doubts remove,
 Which is the attendant Page and which the Queen?

XII.

TO THE MOON.

(COMPOSED BY THE SEA-SIDE,—ON THE COAST OF CUMBERLAND.)

WANDERER! that stoop'st so low, and com'st so near
 To human life's unsettled atmosphere;
 Who lov'st with Night and Silence to partake,
 So might it seem, the cares of them that wake;
 And, through the cottage-lattice softly peeping,
 Dost shield from harm the humblest of the sleeping;
 What pleasure once encompassed those sweet nam
 Which yet in thy behalf the Poet claims,
 An idolizing dreamer as of yore!—
 I slight them all; and, on this sea-beat shore
 Sole-sitting, only can to thoughts attend
 That bid me hail thee as the SAILOR'S FRIEND;
 So call thee for heaven's grace through these m
 known

By confidence supplied and mercy shown,
 When not a twinkling star or beacon's light
 Abates the perils of a stormy night;
 And for less obvious benefits, that find
 Their way, with thy pure help, to heart and mind
 Both for the adventurer starting in life's prime;
 And veteran ranging round from clime to clime,

long-baffled hope's slow fever in his veins,
And wounds and weakness oft his labour's sole
remains.

The aspiring Mountains and the winding Streams,
Empress of Night! are gladdened by thy beams;
A look of thine the wilderness pervades,
And penetrates the forest's inmost shades;
Thou, chequering peaceably the minster's gloom,
Guid'st the pale Mourner to the lost one's tomb;
Against reach the Prisoner—to his grated cell
Welcome, though silent and intangible!—
And lives there one, of all that come and go
In the great waters toiling to and fro,
One, who has watched thee at some quiet hour
Enthroned aloft in undisputed power,
Or crossed by vapoury streaks and clouds that move
Watching the lustre they in part reprove—
Or sometimes felt a fitness in thy sway
To call up thoughts that shun the glare of day,
And make the serious happier than the gay?

Yes, lovely Moon! if thou so mildly bright
Most rouse, yet surely in thy own despite,
To fiercer mood the phrenzy-stricken brain,
Let me a compensating faith maintain;
That there's a sensitive, a tender, part
Which thou canst touch in every human heart,
For healing and composure.—But, as least
And mightiest billows ever have confessed
Thy domination; as the whole vast Sea
Feels through her lowest depths thy sovereignty;
Who shines that countenance with especial grace
On them who urge the keel her *plains* to trace
Hurrowing its way right onward. The most rude,
Cut off from home and country, may have stood—
Even till long gazing hath bedimmed his eye,
Or the mute rapture ended in a sigh—
Touched by accordance of thy placid cheer,
With some internal lights to memory dear,
Or fancies stealing forth to soothe the breast
Tired with its daily share of earth's unrest,—
Gentle awakenings, visitations meek;
A kindly influence whereof few will speak,
Though it can wet with tears the hardest cheek.

And when thy beauty in the shadowy cave
Is hidden, buried in its monthly grave;
When, while the Sailor, mid an open sea
Wept by a favouring wind that leaves thought free,
Peaces the deck—no star perhaps in sight,
And nothing save the moving ship's own light
To cheer the long dark hours of vacant night—

Oft with his musings does thy image blend,
In his mind's eye thy crescent horns ascend,
And thou art still, O Moon, that SAILOR'S FRIEND!

1835.

XIII.

TO THE MOON.

(RYDAL.)

QUEEN of the stars!—so gentle, so benign,
That ancient Fable did to thee assign,
When darkness creeping o'er thy silver brow
Warned thee these upper regions to forego,
Alternate empire in the shades below—
A Bard, who, lately near the wide-spread sea
Traversed by gleaming ships, looked up to thee
With grateful thoughts, doth now thy rising hail
From the close confines of a shadowy vale.
Glory of night, conspicuous yet serene,
Nor less attractive when by glimpses seen
Through cloudy umbrage, well might that fair face,
And all those attributes of modest grace,
In days when Fancy wrought unchecked by fear,
Down to the green earth fetch thee from thy sphere,
To sit in leafy woods by fountains clear!

O still belov'd (for thine, meek Power, are charms
That fascinate the very Babe in arms,
While he, uplifted towards thee, laughs outright,
Spreading his little palms in his glad Mother's sight)
O still belov'd, once worshipped! Time, that frowns
In his destructive flight on earthly crowns,
Spares thy mild splendour; still those far-shot
beams

Tremble on dancing waves and rippling streams
With stainless touch, as chaste as when thy praise
Was sung by Virgin-choirs in festal lays;
And through dark trials still dost thou explore
Thy way for increase punctual as of yore,
When teeming Matrons—yielding to rude faith
In mysteries of birth and life and death
And painful struggle and deliverance—prayed
Of thee to visit them with lenient aid.
What though the rites be swept away, the fanes
Extinct that echoed to the votive strains;
Yet thy mild aspect does not, cannot, cease
Love to promote and purity and peace;
And Fancy, unproved, even yet may trace
Faint types of suffering in thy beamless face.

Then, silent Monitress! let us—not blind
To worlds unthought of till the searching mind
Of Science laid them open to mankind—

Told, also, how the voiceless heavens declare
 God's glory; and acknowledging thy share
 In that blest charge; let us—without offence
 To aught of highest, holiest, influence—
 Receive whatever good 'tis given thee to dispense.
 May sage and simple, catching with one eye
 The moral intimations of the sky,

Learn from thy course, where'er their own be taken,
 'To look on tempests, and be never shaken ;'
 To keep with faithful step the appointed way
 Eclipsing or eclipsed, by night or day,
 And from example of thy monthly range
 Gently to brook decline and fatal change ;
 Meek, patient, steadfast, and with loftier scope,
 Than thy revival yields, for gladsome hope !

1835.

POEMS,

COMPOSED OR SUGGESTED DURING A TOUR, IN THE SUMMER OF 1833.

[Having been prevented by the lateness of the season, in 1831, from visiting Staffa and Iona, the author made these the principal objects of a short tour in the summer of 1833, of which the following series of poems is a Memorial. The course pursued was down the Cumberland river Derwent, and to Whitehaven; thence (by the Isle of Man, where a few days were passed) up the Frith of Clyde to Greenock, then to Oban, Staffa, Iona; and back towards England, by Loch Awe, Inverary, Loch Goll-head, Greenock, and through parts of Renfrewshire, Ayrshire, and Dumfries-shire to Carlisle, and thence up the river Eden, and homewards by Ullswater.]

I.

ADIEU, Rydalian Laurels ! that have grown
 And spread as if ye knew that days might come
 When ye would shelter in a happy home,
 On this fair Mount, a Poet of your own,
 One who ne'er ventured for a Delphic crown
 To sue the God ; but, haunting your green shade
 All seasons through, is humbly pleased to braid
 Ground-flowers, beneath your guardianship, self
 sown.

Farewell ! no Minstrels now with harp new-strung
 For summer wandering quit their household bowers ;
 Yet not for this wants Poesy a tongue
 To cheer the Itinerant on whom she pours
 Her spirit, while he crosses lonely moors,
 Or musing sits forsaken halls among.

II.

WHY should the Enthusiast, journeying through
 this Isle

Repine as if his hour were come too late !
 Not unprotected in her mouldering state,
 Antiquity salutes him with a smile,
 Mid fruitful fields that ring with jocund toil,
 And pleasure-grounds where Taste, refined Co-mate

Of Truth and Beauty, strives to imitate,
 Far as she may, primeval Nature's style.
 Fair Land ! by Time's parental love made free,
 By Social Order's watchful arms embraced ;
 With unexampled union meet in thee,
 For eye and mind, the present and the past ;
 With golden prospect for futurity,
 If that be revered which ought to last.

III.

THEY called Thee MERRY ENGLAND, in old time ;
 A happy people won for thee that name
 With envy heard in many a distant clime ;
 And, spite of change, for me thou keep'st the same
 Endearing title, a responsive chime
 To the heart's fond belief ; though some there are
 Whose sterner judgments deem that word a snare
 For inattentive Fancy, like the lime
 Which foolish birds are caught with. Can, I ask,
 This face of rural beauty be a mask
 For discontent, and poverty, and crime ;
 These spreading towns a cloak for lawless will !
 Forbid it, Heaven !—and MERRY ENGLAND still
 Shall be thy rightful name, in prose and rhyme !

IV.

TO THE RIVER GRETA, NEAR KESWICK.

Greta, what fearful listening ! when huge stones
 Tumble along thy bed, block after block :
 Whirling with reiterated shock,
 Combat, while darkness aggravates the groans :
 If thou (like Cocytus from the moans
 Pard on his rueful margin) thence wert named
 The Mourner, thy true nature was defamed,
 And the habitual murmur that atones
 To thy worst rage, forgotten. Oft as Spring
 Flows, on thy sinuous banks, her thousand thrones,
 Sets of glad instinct and love's carolling,
 To concert, for the happy, then may vie
 With liveliest peals of birth-day harmony :
 On a grieved heart, the notes are benisons.

V.

TO THE RIVER DERWENT.

Along the mountains were we nursed, loved
 Stream !
 Thou near the eagle's nest—within brief sail,
 If his bold wing floating on the gale,
 Were thy deep voice could lull me ! Faint the
 Human life when first allowed to gleam [beam
 Immortal notice.—Glory of the vale,
 Sh thy meek outset, with a crown, though frail,
 Not in perpetual verdure by the steam
 O thy soft breath !—Less vivid wreath entwined
 Nubian victor's brow ; less bright was worn,
 Head of some Roman chief—in triumph borne
 With captives chained ; and shedding from his car
 The sunset splendours of a finished war
 On the proud enslavers of mankind !

VI.

IN SIGHT OF THE TOWN OF COCKERMOUTH.

(Here the Author was born, and his Father's remains
 are laid.)

A point of life between my Parents' dust,
 And yours, my buried Little-ones ! am I ;
 And to those graves looking habitually
 Kindred quiet I repose my trust.
 With to the innocent is more than just,
 Al, to the sinner, mercifully bent ;
 Smay I hope, if truly I repent
 And meekly bear the ills which bear I must :
 And You, my Offspring ! that do still remain,
 May outstrip me in the appointed race,
 Ever, through fault of mine, in mutual pain
 Breathed together for a moment's space,
 To wrong, by love provoked, let love arraign,
 And only love keep in your hearts a place.

VII.

ADDRESS FROM THE SPIRIT OF COCKERMOUTH
 CASTLE.

"Thou look'st upon me, and dost fondly think,
 Poet ! that, stricken as both are by years,
 We, differing once so much, are now Compeers,
 Prepared, when each has stood his time, to sink
 Into the dust. Erewhile a sterner link
 United us ; when thou, in boyish play,
 Entering my dungeon, didst become a prey
 To soul-appalling darkness. Not a blink
 Of light was there ;—and thus did I, thy Tutor,
 Make thy young thoughts acquainted with the grave ;
 While thou wert chasing the wing'd butterfly
 Through my green courts ; or climbing, a bold suitor,
 Up to the flowers whose golden progeny
 Still round my shattered brow in beauty wave."

VIII.

NUN'S WELL, BRIGHAM.

The cattle crowding round this beverage clear
 To slake their thirst, with reckless hoofs have trod
 The encircling turf into a barren clod ;
 Through which the waters creep, then disappear,
 Born to be lost in Derwent flowing near ;
 Yet, o'er the brink, and round the lime-stone cell
 Of the pure spring (they call it the "Nun's Well,"
 Name that first struck by chance my startled ear)
 A tender Spirit broods—the pensive Shade
 Of ritual honours to this Fountain paid
 By hooded Votaresses with saintly cheer ;
 Albeit oft the Virgin-mother mild
 Looked down with pity upon eyes beguiled
 Into the shedding of 'too soft a tear.'

IX.

TO A FRIEND.

(ON THE BANKS OF THE DERWENT.)

PASTOR and Patriot !—at whose bidding rise
 These modest walls, amid a flock that need,
 For one who comes to watch them and to feed,
 A fixed Abode—keep down presageful sighs.
 Threats, which the unthinking only can despise,
 Perplex the Church ; but be thou firm,—be true
 To thy first hope, and this good work pursue,
 Poor as thou art. A welcome sacrifice
 Dost Thou prepare, whose sign will be the smoke
 Of thy new hearth ; and sooner shall its wreaths,
 Mounting while earth her morning incense breathes,
 From wandering fiends of air receive a yoke,
 And straightway cease to aspire, than God disdain
 This humble tribute as ill-timed or vain.

X.

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS.

(LANDING AT THE MOUTH OF THE DERWENT, WORKINGTON.)

DEAR to the Loves, and to the Graces vowed,
 The Queen drew back the wimple that she wore;
 And to the throng, that on the Cumbrian shore
 Her landing hailed, how touchingly she bowed!
 And like a Star (that, from a heavy cloud
 Of pine-tree foliage poised in air, forth darts,
 When a soft summer gale at evening parts
 The gloom that did its loveliness enshroud)
 She smiled; but Time, the old Saturnian seer,
 Sighed on the wing as her foot pressed the strand,
 With step prelude to a long array
 Of woes and degradations hand in hand—
 Weeping captivity, and shuddering fear
 Stilled by the ensanguined block of Fotheringay!

XI.

STANZAS SUGGESTED IN A STEAM-BOAT OFF SAINT
 BEES' HEADS, ON THE COAST OF CUMBERLAND.

IF Life were slumber on a bed of down,
 Toil unimposed, vicissitude unknown,
 Sad were our lot: no hunter of the hare
 Exults like him whose javelin from the lair
 Has roused the lion; no one plucks the rose,
 Whose proffered beauty in safe shelter blows
 'Mid a trim garden's summer luxuries,
 With joy like his who climbs, on hands and knees,
 For some rare plant, yon Headland of St. Bees.

This independence upon oar and sail,
 This new indifference to breeze or gale,
 This straight-lined progress, furrowing a flat lea,
 And regular as if locked in certainty—
 Depress the hours. Up, Spirit of the storm!
 That Courage may find something to perform;
 That Fortitude, whose blood disdains to freeze
 At Danger's bidding, may confront the seas,
 Firm as the towering Headlands of St. Bees.

Dread cliff of Baruth! *that* wild wish may sleep,
 Bold as if men and creatures of the Deep
 Breathed the same element; too many wrecks
 Have struck thy sides, too many ghastly decks
 Hast thou looked down upon, that such a thought
 Should here be welcome, and in verse enwrought:
 With thy stern aspect better far agrees
 Utterance of thanks that we have past with ease,
 As millions thus shall do, the Headlands of St. Bees.

Yet, while each useful Art augments her store,
 What boots the gain if Nature should lose more!
 And Wisdom, as she holds a Christian place
 In man's intelligence sublimed by grace?
 When Bega sought of yore the Cumbrian coast,
 Tempestuous winds her holy errand cross'd:
 She knelt in prayer—the waves their wrath appease
 And, from her vow well weighed in Heaven's decrees
 Rose, where she touched the strand, the Chantry
 of St. Bees.

'Cruel of heart were they, bloody of hand,'
 Who in these Wilds then struggled for command
 The strong were merciless, without hope the weak
 Till this bright Stranger came, fair as day-break,
 And as a cresset true that darts its length
 Of beamy lustre from a tower of strength;
 Guiding the mariner through troubled seas,
 And cheering off his peaceful reveries,
 Like the fixed Light that crowns yon Headland
 St. Bees.

To aid the Votress, miracles believed
 Wrought in men's minds, like miracles achieved
 So piety took root; and Song might tell
 What humanizing virtues near her cell
 Sprang up, and spread their fragrance wide around
 How savage bosoms melted at the sound
 Of gospel-truth enchained in harmonies
 Wafted o'er waves, or creeping through close trees
 From her religious Mansion of St. Bees.

When her sweet Voice, that instrument of love,
 Was glorified, and took its place, above
 The silent stars, among the angelic quire,
 Her chantry blazed with sacrilegious fire,
 And perished utterly; but her good deeds
 Had sown the spot, that witnessed them, with seed
 Which lay in earth expectant, till a breeze
 With quickening impulse answered their mute plea
 And lo! a *statelier* pile, the Abbey of St. Bees.

There are the naked clothed, the hungry fed;
 And Charity extendeth to the dead
 Her intercessions made for the soul's rest
 Of tardy penitents; or for the best
 Among the good (when love might else have slept
 Sickened, or died) in pious memory kept.
 Thanks to the austere and simple Devotees,
 Who, to that service bound by venial fees,
 Keep watch before the altars of St. Bees.

Are not, in sooth, their Requiems sacred ties
 Woven out of passion's sharpest agonies,

subdued, composed, and formalized by art,
 fix a wiser sorrow in the heart ?
 e prayer for them whose hour is past away
 ys to the Living, profit while ye may !
 little part, and that the worst, he sees
 ho thinks that priestly cunning holds the keys
 at best unlock the secrets of St. Bees.

conscience, the timid being's inmost light,
 pe of the dawn and solace of the night,
 eers these Recluses with a steady ray
 many an hour when judgment goes astray.
 ! scorn not hastily their rule who try
 irth to despise, and flesh to mortify ;
 nsume with zeal, in wingèd ecstasies
 prayer and praise forget their rosaries,
 r hear the loudest surges of St. Bees.

t none so prompt to succour and protect
 e forlorn traveller, or sailor wrecked
 e the bare coast ; nor do they grudge the boon
 rich staff and cockle hat and sandal shoon
 im for the pilgrim : and, though chidings sharp
 y sometimes greet the strolling minstrel's harp,
 is not then when, swept with sportive ease,
 eharms a feast-day throng of all degrees,
 ightening the archway of revered St. Bees.

w did the cliffs and echoing hills rejoice
 at time the Benedictine Brethren's voice,
 ploring, or commanding with meet pride,
 mmoned the Chiefs to lay their feuds aside,
 d under one blest ensign serve the Lord
 Palestine. Advance, indignant Sword !
 ming till thou from Panym hands release
 at Tomb, dread centre of all sanctities
 rsed in the quiet Abbey of St. Bees.

t look we now to them whose minds from far
 llow the fortunes which they may not share.
 hile in Judea Fancy loves to roam,
 e helps to make a Holy-land at home :
 e Star of Bethlehem from its sphere invites
 sound the crystal depth of maiden rights ;
 d wedded Life, through scriptural mysteries,
 avenward ascends with all her charities,
 ight by the hooded Celibates of St. Bees.

r be it e'er forgotten how by skill
 cloistered Architects, free their souls to fill
 th love of God, throughout the Land were raised
 urches, on whose symbolic beauty gazed
 asant and mail-clad Chief with pious awe ;
 at this day men seeing what they saw,

Or the bare wreck of faith's solemnities,
 Aspire to more than earthly destinies ;
 Witness yon Pile that greets us from St. Bees.

Yet more ; around those Churches, gathered Towns
 Safe from the feudal Castle's haughty frowns ;
 Peaceful abodes, where Justice might uphold
 Her scales with even hand, and culture mould
 The heart to pity, train the mind in care
 For rules of life, sound as the Time could bear.
 Nor dost thou fail, thro' abject love of ease,
 Or hindrance raised by sordid purposes,
 To bear thy part in this good work, St. Bees.

Who with the ploughshare clove the barren moors,
 And to green meadows changed the swampy shores ?
 Thinned the rank woods ; and for the cheerful
 grange

Made room where wolf and boar were used to range ?
 Who taught, and showed by deeds, that gentler
 chains

Should bind the vassal to his lord's domains ?
 The thoughtful Monks, intent their God to please,
 For Christ's dear sake, by human sympathies
 Poured from the bosom of thy Church, St. Bees !

But all availed not ; by a mandate given
 Through lawless will the Brotherhood was driven
 Forth from their cells ; their ancient House laid low
 In Reformation's sweeping overthrow.
 But now once more the local Heart revives,
 The inextinguishable Spirit strives.
 Oh may that Power who hushed the stormy seas,
 And cleared a way for the first Votaries,
 Prosper the new-born College of St. Bees !

Alas ! the Genius of our age, from Schools
 Less humble, draws her lessons, aims, and rules.
 To Prowess guided by her insight keen
 Matter and Spirit are as one Machine ;
 Boastful Idolatress of formal skill
 She in her own would merge the eternal will :
 Better, if Reason's triumphs match with these,
 Her flight before the bold credulities
 That furthered the first teaching of St. Bees.*

1833.

* See Excursion, seventh part ; and Ecclesiastical Sketches, second part, near the beginning.

XII.

IN THE CHANNEL, BETWEEN THE COAST OF CUMBERLAND AND THE ISLE OF MAN.

RANGING the heights of Scawfell or Black-comb,
In his lone course the Shepherd oft will pause,
And strive to fathom the mysterious laws
By which the clouds, arrayed in light or gloom,
On Mona settle, and the shapes assume
Of all her peaks and ridges. What he draws
From sense, faith, reason, fancy, of the cause,
He will take with him to the silent tomb.
Or, by his fire, a child upon his knee,
Haply the untaught Philosopher may speak
Of the strange sight, nor hide his theory
That satisfies the simple and the meek,
Blest in their pious ignorance, though weak
To cope with Sages undevoutly free.

XIII.

AT SEA OFF THE ISLE OF MAN.

BOLD words affirmed, in days when faith was strong
And doubts and scruples seldom teased the brain,
That no adventurer's bark had power to gain
These shores if he approached them bent on wrong ;
For, suddenly up-conjured from the Main,
Mists rose to hide the Land—that search, though
long

And eager, might be still pursued in vain.
O Fancy, what an age was *that* for song !
That age, when not by *laws* inanimate,
As men believed, the waters were impelled,
The air controlled, the stars their courses held ;
But element and orb on *acts* did wait
Of *Powers* endued with visible form, instinct
With will, and to their work by passion linked.

XIV.

DESIRE we past illusions to recal ?
To reinstate wild Fancy, would we hide
Truths whose thick veil Science has drawn aside ?
No,—let this Age, high as she may, instal
In her esteem the thirst that wrought man's fall,
The universe is infinitely wide ;
And conquering Reason, if self-glorified,
Can nowhere move uncrossed by some new wall
Or gulf of mystery, which thou alone,
Imaginative Faith ! canst overleap,
In progress toward the fount of Love,—the throne
Of Power whose ministers the records keep
Of periods fixed, and laws established, less
Flesh to exalt than prove its nothingness.

XV.

ON ENTERING DOUGLAS BAY, ISLE OF MAN.

'Dignum laude virum Musa vetat mori'

THE feudal Keep, the bastions of Cohorn,
Even when they rose to check or to repel
Tides of aggressive war, oft served as well
Greedy ambition, armed to treat with scorn
Just limits ; but yon Tower, whose smiles adorn
This perilous bay, stands clear of all offence ;
Blest work it is of love and innocence,
A Tower of refuge built for the else forlorn.
Spare it, ye waves, and lift the mariner,
Struggling for life, into its saving arms !
Spare, too, the human helpers ! Do they stir
'Mid your fierce shock like men afraid to die ?
No ; their dread service nerves the heart it warms
And they are led by noble HILLARY*.

XVI.

BY THE SEA-SHORE, ISLE OF MAN.

WHY stand we gazing on the sparkling Brine,
With wonder smit by its transparency,
And all-enraptured with its purity ?—
Because the unstained, the clear, the crystalline
Have ever in them something of benign ;
Whether in gem, in water, or in sky,
A sleeping infant's brow, or wakeful eye
Of a young maiden, only not divine.
Scarcely the hand forbears to dip its palm
For beverage drawn as from a mountain-well.
Temptation centres in the liquid Calm ;
Our daily raiment seems no obstacle
To instantaneous plunging in, deep Sea !
And revelling in long embrace with thee†

XVII.

ISLE OF MAN.

A YOUTH too certain of his power to wade
On the smooth bottom of this clear bright sea,
To sight so shallow, with a bather's glee
Leapt from this rock, and but for timely aid
He, by the alluring element betrayed,
Had perished. Then might Sea-nymphs (and v[er]y
Of self-reproach) have chanted elegies [sic]
Bewailing his sad fate, when he was laid
In peaceful earth : for, doubtless, he was frank
Utterly in himself devoid of guile ;
Knew not the double-dealing of a smile ;
Nor aught that makes men's promises a blank,
Or deadly snare : and He survives to bless
The Power that saved him in his strange distr[ess].

* See Note.

† The sea-water on the coast of the Isle of Man is singularly pure and beautiful.

XVIII.

ISLE OF MAN.

And pangs of grief for lenient time too keen,
 Grief that devouring waves had caused—or guilt
 Which they had witnessed, sway the man who built
 His Homestead, placed where nothing could be seen,
 Ought heard, of ocean troubled or serene?
 Tired Ship-soldier on paternal land,
 What o'er the channel holds august command,
 The dwelling raised,—a veteran Marine.
 He, in disgust, turned from the neighbouring sea
 To shun the memory of a listless life
 That hung between two callings. May no strife
 More hurtful here beset him, doomed though free,
 Self-doomed, to worse inaction, till his eye
 Drink from the daily sight of earth and sky!

XIX.

BY A RETIRED MARINER.

(A FRIEND OF THE AUTHOR.)

From early youth I ploughed the restless Main,
 My mind as restless and as apt to change;
 Through every clime and ocean did I range,
 In hope at length a competence to gain;
 Or poor to Sea I went, and poor I still remain.
 Year after year I strove, but strove in vain,
 And hardships manifold did I endure,
 Or Fortune on me never deign'd to smile;
 But at last a resting-place have found,
 With just enough life's comforts to procure,
 In a snug Cove on this our favoured Isle,
 A peaceful spot where Nature's gifts abound;
 Then sure I have no reason to complain,
 Though poor to Sea I went, and poor I still remain.

XX.

AT BALA-SALA, ISLE OF MAN.

(SUPPOSED TO BE WRITTEN BY A FRIEND.)

Taken in fortune, but in mind entire
 And sound in principle, I seek repose
 Where ancient trees this convent-pile enclose*,
 Ruin beautiful. When vain desire
 Intrudes on peace, I pray the eternal Sire
 To cast a soul-subduing shade on me,
 A grey-haired, pensive, thankful Refugee;
 A shade—but with some sparks of heavenly fire
 To these cells vouchsafed. And when I note
 The old Tower's brow yellowed as with the beams
 Of sunset ever there, albeit streams
 Of stormy weather-stains that semblance wrought,
 Thank the silent Monitor, and say
 Shine so, my aged brow, at all hours of the day!"

* Rushen Abbey.

XXI.

TYNWALD HILL.

ONCE on the top of Tynwald's formal mound
 (Still marked with green turf circles narrowing
 Stage above stage) would sit this Island's King,
 The laws to promulgate, enrobed and crowned;
 While, compassing the little mount around,
 Degrees and Orders stood, each under each:
 Now, like to things within fate's easiest reach,
 The power is merged, the pomp a grave has found.
 Off with yon cloud, old Snafell! that thine eye
 Over three Realms may take its widest range;
 And let, for them, thy fountains utter strange
 Voices, thy winds break forth in prophecy,
 If the whole State must suffer mortal change,
 Like Mona's miniature of sovereignty.

XXII.

DESPOD who will—I heard a voice exclaim,
 "Though fierce the assault, and shatter'd the defence,
 It cannot be that Britain's social frame,
 The glorious work of time and providence,
 Before a flying season's rash pretence,
 Should fall; that She, whose virtue put to shame,
 When Europe prostrate lay, the Conqueror's aim,
 Should perish, self-subverted. Black and dense
 The cloud is; but brings that a day of doom
 To Liberty? Her sun is up the while,
 That orb whose beams round Saxon Alfred shone:
 Then laugh, ye innocent Vales! ye Streams, sweep
 on,
 Nor let one billow of our heaven-blest Isle
 Toss in the fanning wind a humbler plume."

XXIII.

IN THE FRITH OF CLYDE, AILSA CRAG.

DURING AN ECLIPSE OF THE SUN, JULY 17.

SINCE risen from ocean, ocean to defy,
 Appeared the Crag of Ailsa, ne'er did morn
 With gleaming lights more gracefully adorn
 His sides, or wreath with mist his forehead high:
 Now, faintly darkening with the sun's eclipse,
 Still is he seen, in lone sublimity,
 Towering above the sea and little ships;
 For dwarfs the tallest seem while sailing by,
 Each for her haven; with her freight of Care,
 Pleasure, or Grief, and Toil that seldom looks
 Into the secret of to-morrow's fare;
 Though poor, yet rich, without the wealth of books,
 Or aught that watchful Love to Nature owes
 For her mute Powers, fix'd Forms, or transient
 Shows.

XXIV.

ON THE FRITH OF CLYDE.

(IN A STEAM-BOAT.)

ARRAN! a single-crested Teneriffe,
 A St. Helena next—in shape and hue,
 Varying her crowded peaks and ridges blue;
 Who but must covet a cloud-seat, or skiff
 Built for the air, or wingèd Hippogriff?
 That he might fly, where no one could pursue,
 From this dull Monster and her sooty crew;
 And, as a God, light on thy topmost cliff.
 Impotent wish! which reason would despise
 If the mind knew no union of extremes,
 No natural bond between the boldest schemes
 Ambition frames, and heart-humilities.
 Beneath stern mountains many a soft vale lies,
 And lofty springs give birth to lowly streams.

XXV.

ON REVISITING DUNOLLY CASTLE.

[See former series, p. 337.]

THE captive Bird was gone;—to cliff or moor
 Perchance had flown, delivered by the storm;
 Or he had pined, and sunk to feed the worm:
 Him found we not: but, climbing a tall tower,
 There saw, impaved with rude fidelity
 Of art mosaic, in a roofless floor,
 An Eagle with stretched wings, but beamless eye—
 An Eagle that could neither wail nor soar.
 Effigy of the Vanished—(shall I dare
 To call thee so?) or symbol of fierce deeds
 And of the towering courage which past times
 Rejoiced in—take, whate'er thou be, a share,
 Not undeserved, of the memorial rhymes
 That animate my way where'er it leads!

XXVI.

THE DUNOLLY EAGLE.

Nor to the clouds, not to the cliff, he flew;
 But when a storm, on sea or mountain bred,
 Came and delivered him, alone he sped
 Into the castle-dungeon's darkest mew.
 Now, near his master's house in open view
 He dwells, and hears indignant tempests howl,
 Kennelled and chained. Ye tame domestic fowl,
 Beware of him! Thou, saucy cockatoo,
 Look to thy plumage and thy life!—The roe,
 Fleet as the west wind, is for *him* no quarry;
 Balanced in ether he will never tarry,
 Eyeing the sea's blue depths. Poor Bird! even so
 Doth man of brother man a creature make
 That clings to slavery for its own sad sake.

XXVII.

WRITTEN IN A BLANK LEAF OF MACPHERSON'S
OSSIAN.

OfT have I caught, upon a fitful breeze,
 Fragments of far-off melodies,
 With ear not coveting the whole,
 A part so charmed the pensive soul:
 While a dark storm before my sight
 Was yielding, on a mountain height
 Loose vapours have I watched, that won
 Prismatic colours from the sun;
 Nor felt a wish that heaven would show
 The image of its perfect bow.
 What need, then, of these finished Strains?
 Away with counterfeit Remains!
 An abbey in its lone recess,
 A temple of the wilderness,
 Wrecks though they be, announce with feeling
 The majesty of honest dealing.
 Spirit of Ossian! if imbound
 In language thou may'st yet be found,
 If aught (intrusted to the pen
 Or floating on the tongues of men,
 Albeit shattered and impaired)
 Subsist thy dignity to guard,
 In concert with memorial claim
 Of old grey stone, and high-born name
 That cleaves to rock or pillared cave
 Where moans the blast, or beats the wave,
 Let Truth, stern arbitress of all,
 Interpret that Original,
 And for presumptuous wrongs atone;—
 Authentic words be given, or none!

Time is not blind;—yet He, who spares
 Pyramid pointing to the stars,
 Hath preyed with ruthless appetite
 On all that marked the primal flight
 Of the poetic ecstasy
 Into the land of mystery.
 No tongue is able to rehearse
 One measure, Orpheus! of thy verse;
 Museus, stationed with his lyre
 Supreme among the Elysian quire,
 Is, for the dwellers upon earth,
 Mute as a lark ere morning's birth.
 Why grieve for these, though past away
 The music, and extinct the lay?
 When thousands, by severer doom,
 Full early to the silent tomb
 Have sunk, at Nature's call; or strayed
 From hope and promise, self-betrayed;

The garland withering on their brows ;
Stung with remorse for broken vows ;
Frantic—else how might they rejoice ?
And friendless, by their own sad choice !

Hail, Bards of mightier grasp ! on you
I chiefly call, the chosen Few,
Who cast not off the acknowledged guide,
Who faltered not, nor turned aside ;
Whose lofty genius could survive
Privation, under sorrow thrive ;
In whom the fiery Muse revered
The symbol of a snow-white beard,
Bedewed with meditative tears
Dropped from the lenient cloud of years.

Brothers in soul ! though distant times
Produced you nursed in various climes,
Ye, when the orb of life had waned,
A plenitude of love retained :
Hence, while in you each sad regret
By corresponding hope was met,
Ye lingered among human kind,
Sweet voices for the passing wind ;
Departing sunbeams, loth to stop,
Though smiling on the last hill top !
Such to the tender-hearted maid
Even ere her joys begin to fade ;
Such, haply, to the rugged chief
By fortune crushed, or tamed by grief ;
Appears, on Morven's lonely shore,
Dim-gleaming through imperfect lore,
The Son of Fingal ; such was blind
Mæonides of ampler mind ;
Such Milton, to the fountain head
Of glory by Urania led !

1824.

XXVIII.

CAVE OF STAFFA.

I saw, but surely, in the motley crowd,
That One of us has felt the far-famed sight ;
How could we feel it ? each the other's blight,
Hurried and hurrying, volatile and loud.
For those motions only that invite
The Ghost of Fingal to his tuneful Cave
The breeze entered, and wave after wave
Tidily embosoming the timid light !
Led by one Votary who at will might stand
Gazing and take into his mind and heart,
With undistracted reverence, the effect
Of those proportions where the almighty hand
At made the worlds, the sovereign Architect,
Is designed to work as if with human Art !

XXIX.

CAVE OF STAFFA.

AFTER THE CROWD HAD DEPARTED.

THANKS for the lessons of this Spot—fit school
For the presumptuous thoughts that would assign
Mechanic laws to agency divine ;
And, measuring heaven by earth, would overrule
Infinite Power. The pillared vestibule,
Expanding yet precise, the roof embowed,
Might seem designed to humble man, when proud
Of his best workmanship by plan and tool.
Down-bearing with his whole Atlantic weight
Of tide and tempest on the Structure's base,
And flashing to that Structure's topmost height,
Ocean has proved its strength, and of its grace
In calms is conscious, finding for his freight
Of softest music some responsive place.

XXX.

CAVE OF STAFFA.

YE shadowy Beings, that have rights and claims
In every cell of Fingal's mystic Grot,
Where are ye ? Driven or venturing to the spot,
Our fathers glimpses caught of your thin Frames,
And, by your mien and bearing, knew your names ;
And they could hear *his* ghostly song who trod
Earth, till the flesh lay on him like a load,
While he struck his desolate harp without hopes or
Vanished ye are, but subject to recal ; [aims.
Why keep *we* else the instincts whose dread law
Ruled here of yore, till what men felt they saw,
Not by black arts but magic natural !
If eyes be still sworn vassals of belief,
Yon light shapes forth a Bard, that shade a Chief.

XXXI.

FLOWERS ON THE TOP OF THE PILLARS AT THE
ENTRANCE OF THE CAVE.

HOPE smiled when your nativity was cast,
Children of Summer ! Ye fresh Flowers that brave
What Summer here escapes not, the fierce wave,
And whole artillery of the western blast,
Battering the Temple's front, its long-drawn nave
Smiting, as if each moment were their last.
But ye, bright Flowers, on frieze and architrave
Survive, and once again the Pile stands fast :
Calm as the Universe, from specular towers
Of heaven contemplated by Spirits pure
With mute astonishment, it stands sustained
Through every part in symmetry, to endure,
Unhurt, the assault of Time with all his hours,
As the supreme Artificer ordained.

XXXII.

IONA.

ON to Iona!—What can she afford
To us save matter for a thoughtful sigh,
Heaved over ruin with stability
In urgent contrast? To diffuse the WORD
(Thy Paramount, mighty Nature! and Time's Lord)
Her Temples rose, 'mid pagan gloom; but why,
Even for a moment, has our verse deplored
Their wrongs, since they fulfilled their destiny?
And when, subjected to a common doom
Of mutability, those far-famed Piles
Shall disappear from both the sister Isles,
Iona's Saints, forgetting not past days,
Garlands shall wear of amaranthine bloom,
While heaven's vast sea of voices chants their praise.

XXXIII.

IONA.

(UPON LANDING.)

How sad a welcome! To each voyager
Some ragged child holds up for sale a store
Of wave-worn pebbles, pleading on the shore
Where once came monk and nun with gentle stir,
Blessings to give, news ask, or suit prefer.
Yet is yon neat trim church a grateful speck
Of novelty amid the sacred wreck
Strewn far and wide. Think, proud Philosopher!
Fallen though she be, this Glory of the west,
Still on her sons, the beams of mercy shine;
And 'hopes, perhaps more heavenly bright than
A grace by thee unsought and unpossest, [thine,
A faith more fixed, a rapture more divine
Shall gild their passage to eternal rest.'

XXXIV.

THE BLACK STONES OF IONA.

[See Martin's Voyage among the Western Isles.]

HERE on their knees men swore: the stones were
black,
Black in the people's minds and words, yet they
Were at that time, as now, in colour grey.
But what is colour, if upon the rack
Of conscience souls are placed by deeds that lack
Concord with oaths? What differ night and day
Then, when before the Perjured on his way
Hell opens, and the heavens in vengeance crack
Above his head uplifted in vain prayer
To Saint, or Fiend, or to the Godhead whom
He had insulted—Peasant, King, or Thane?
Fly where the culprit may, guilt meets a doom;
And, from invisible worlds at need laid bare,
Come links for social order's awful chain.

XXXV.

HOMEWARD we turn. Isle of Columba's Cell,
Where Christian piety's soul-cheering spark
(Kindled from Heaven between the light and dar
Of time) shone like the morning-star, farewell!—
And fare thee well, to Fancy visible,
Remote St. Kilda, lone and loved sea-mark
For many a voyage made in her swift bark,
When with more hues than in the rainbow dwell
Thou a mysterious intercourse dost hold,
Extracting from clear skies and air serene,
And out of sun-bright waves, a lucid veil,
That thickens, spreads, and, mingling fold with fold
Makes known, when thou no longer canst be seen
Thy whereabouts, to warn the approaching sail.

XXXVI.

GREENOCK.

Per me si va nella Città dolente.

WE have not passed into a doleful City,
We who were led to-day down a grim dell,
By some too boldly named 'the Jaws of Hell':
Where be the wretched ones, the sights for pity!
These crowded streets resound no plaintive ditty:
As from the hive where bees in summer dwell,
Sorrow seems here excluded; and that knell,
It neither damps the gay, nor checks the witty.
Alas! too busy Rival of old Tyre, [throne
Whose merchants Princes were, whose decks we
Soon may the punctual sea in vain respire
To serve thy need, in union with that Clyde
Whose nursling current brawls o'er mossy stone
The poor, the lonely, herdsman's joy and pride.

XXXVII.

"THERE!" said a Stripling, pointing with meet pride
Towards a low roof with green trees half conceal
"Is Mosgiel Farm; and that's the very field
Where Burns ploughed up the Daisy." Far a
wide
A plain below stretched seaward, while, descried
Above sea-clouds, the Peaks of Arran rose;
And, by that simple notice, the repose
Of earth, sky, sea, and air, was vivified.
Beneath 'the random *bield* of clod or stone'
Myriads of daisies have shone forth in flower
Near the lark's nest, and in their natural hour
Have passed away; less happy than the One
That, by the unwilling ploughshare, died to pro
The tender charm of poetry and love.

XXXVIII.

THE RIVER EDEN, CUMBERLAND.

EDEN ! till now thy beauty had I viewed
 By glimpses only, and confess with shame
 That verse of mine, whate'er its varying mood,
 Repeats but once the sound of thy sweet name :
 Yet fetched from Paradise that honour came,
 Lightfully borne ; for Nature gives thee flowers
 That have no rivals among British bowers ;
 And thy bold rocks are worthy of their fame.
 Measuring thy course, fair Stream ! at length I pay
 To my life's neighbour dues of neighbourhood ;
 But I have traced thee on thy winding way
 With pleasure sometimes by this thought restrained
 Of things far off we toil, while many a good
 Not sought, because too near, is never gained.

XXXIX.

MONUMENT OF MRS. HOWARD,

(by Nollekens.)

WETHERAL CHURCH, NEAR CORBY, ON THE BANKS OF
THE EDEN.

ETCHED on the dying Mother's lap, lies dead
 Her new-born Babe ; dire ending of bright hope !
 At Sculpture here, with the divinest scope
 Of luminous faith, heavenward hath raised that head
 Patiently ; and through one hand has spread
 Touch so tender for the insensate Child—
 Earth's lingering love to parting reconciled,
 Grief parting, for the spirit is all but fled)—
 That we, who contemplate the turns of life
 Through this still medium, are consoled and cheered ;
 Feel with the Mother, think the severed Wife
 Less to be lamented than revered ;
 And own that Art, triumphant over strife
 And pain, hath powers to Eternity endeared.

XL.

SUGGESTED BY THE FOREGOING.

ANQUILLITY ! the sovereign aim wert thou
 Of heathen schools of philosophic lore ;
 Part-stricken by stern destiny of yore
 The Tragic Muse thee served with thoughtful vow ;
 And what of hope Elysium could allow
 As fondly seized by Sculpture, to restore
 Peace to the Mourner. But when He who wore
 The crown of thorns around his bleeding brow
 Armed our sad being with celestial light,
 Then Arts which still had drawn a softening grace
 From shadowy fountains of the Infinite,
 Immuned with that Idea face to face :
 And move around it now as planets run,
 Each in its orbit round the central Sun.

XLI.

NUNNERY.

THE floods are roused, and will not soon be weary ;
 Down from the Pennine Alps* how fiercely sweeps
 CROGLIN, the stately Eden's tributary !
 He raves, or through some moody passage creeps
 Plotting new mischief—out again he leaps
 Into broad light, and sends, through regions airy,
 That voice which soothed the Nuns while on the
 Steeps
 They knelt in prayer, or sang to blissful Mary.
 That union ceased : then, cleaving easy walks
 Through crags, and smoothing paths beset with
 Danger,
 Came studious Taste ; and many a pensive stranger
 Dreams on the banks, and to the river talks.
 What change shall happen next to Nunnery Dell ?
 Canal, and Viaduct, and Railway, tell !

XLII.

STEAMBOATS, VIADUCTS, AND RAILWAYS.

MOTIONS and Means, on land and sea at war
 With old poetic feeling, not for this,
 Shall ye, by Poets even, be judged amiss !
 Nor shall your presence, howsoever it mar
 The loveliness of Nature, prove a bar
 To the Mind's gaining that prophetic sense
 Of future change, that point of vision, whence
 May be discovered what in soul ye are.
 In spite of all that beauty may disown
 In your harsh features, Nature doth embrace
 Her lawful offspring in Man's art ; and Time,
 Pleased with your triumphs o'er his brother Space,
 Accepts from your bold hands the proffered crown
 Of hope, and smiles on you with cheer sublime.

XLIII.

THE MONUMENT COMMONLY CALLED LONG MEG AND HER
DAUGHTERS, NEAR THE RIVER EDEN.

A WEIGHT of awe, not easy to be borne,
 Fell suddenly upon my Spirit—cast
 From the dread bosom of the unknown past,
 When first I saw that family forlorn.
 Speak Thou, whose massy strength and stature scorn
 The power of years—pre-eminent, and placed
 Apart, to overlook the circle vast—
 Speak, Giant-mother ! tell it to the Morn
 While she dispels the cumbrous shades of Night ;
 Let the Moon hear, emerging from a cloud ;
 At whose behest uprose on British ground
 That Sisterhood, in hieroglyphic round
 Forth-shadowing, some have deemed, the infinite
 The inviolable God, that tames the proud† !

* The chain of Crossfell.

† See Note.

XLIV.

LOWTHER.

LOWTHER ! in thy majestic Pile are seen
 Cathedral pomp and grace, in apt accord
 With the baronial castle's sterner mien ;
 Union significant of God adored,
 And charters won and guarded by the sword
 Of ancient honour ; whence that goodly state
 Of polity which wise men venerate,
 And will maintain, if God his help afford.
 Hourly the democratic torrent swells ;
 For airy promises and hopes suborned [scorned.
 The strength of backward-looking thoughts is
 Fall if ye must, ye Towers and Pinnacles,
 With what ye symbolise ; authentic Story
 Will say, Ye disappeared with England's Glory !

XLV.

TO THE EARL OF LONSDALE.

'Magistratus indicat virum.'

LONSDALE ! it were unworthy of a Guest,
 Whose heart with gratitude to thee inclines,
 If he should speak, by fancy touched, of signs
 On thy Abode harmoniously imprest,
 Yet be unmoved with wishes to attest
 How in thy mind and moral frame agree
 Fortitude, and that Christian Charity
 Which, filling, consecrates the human breast.
 And if the Motto on thy 'scutcheon teach
 With truth, 'THE MAGISTRACY SHOWS THE MAN ;'
 That searching test thy public course has stood ;
 As will be owned alike by bad and good,
 Soon as the measuring of life's little span
 Shall place thy virtues out of Envy's reach*.

XLVI.

THE SOMNAMBULIST.

LIST, ye who pass by Lyulph's Tower†
 At eve ; how softly then
 Doth Aira-force, that torrent hoarse,
 Speak from the woody glen !
 Fit music for a solemn vale !
 And holier seems the ground
 To him who catches on the gale
 The spirit of a mournful tale,
 Embodied in the sound.

* See Note.

† A pleasure-house built by the late Duke of Norfolk upon the banks of Ullswater. FORCE is the word used in the Lake District for Water-fall.

Not far from that fair site whereon
 The Pleasure-house is reared,
 As story says, in antique days
 A stern-brow'd house appeared ;
 Foil to a Jewel rich in light
 There set, and guarded well ;
 Cage for a Bird of plumage bright,
 Sweet-voiced, nor wishing for a flight
 Beyond her native dell.

To win this bright Bird from her cage,
 To make this Gem their own,
 Came Barons bold, with store of gold,
 And Knights of high renown ;
 But one She prized, and only one ;
 Sir Eglamore was he ;
 Full happy season, when was known,
 Ye Dales and Hills ! to you alone
 Their mutual loyalty—

Known chiefly, Aira ! to thy glen,
 Thy brook, and bowers of holly ;
 Where Passion caught what Nature taught,
 That all but love is folly ;
 Where Fact with Fancy stooped to play ;
 Doubt came not, nor regret—
 To trouble hours that winged their way,
 As if through an immortal day
 Whose sun could never set.

But in old times Love dwelt not long
 Sequester'd with repose ;
 Best throve the fire of chaste desire,
 Fanned by the breath of foes.
 "A conquering lance is beauty's test,
 "And proves the Lover true ;"
 So spake Sir Eglamore, and pressed
 The drooping Emma to his breast,
 And looked a blind adieu.

They parted.—Well with him it fared
 Through wide-spread regions errant ;
 A knight of proof in love's behoof,
 The thirst of fame his warrant :
 And She her happiness can build
 On woman's quiet hours ;
 Though faint, compared with spear and shield,
 The solace beads and masses yield,
 And needlework and flowers.

Yet blest was Emma when she heard
 Her Champion's praise recounted ;
 Though brain would swim, and eyes grow dim
 And high her blushes mounted ;

Or when a bold heroic lay

She warbled from full heart ;
Delightful blossoms for the *May*
Of absence ! but they will not stay,
Born only to depart.

Hope wanes with her, while lustre fills
Whatever path he chooses ;
As if his orb, that owns no curb,
Received the light hers loses.
He comes not back ; an ampler space
Requires for nobler deeds ;
He ranges on from place to place,
Till of his doings is no trace,
But what her fancy breeds.

His fame may spread, but in the past
Her spirit finds its centre ;
Clear sight She has of what he was,
And that would now content her.

" Still is he my devoted Knight ? "

The tear in answer flows ;
Month falls on month with heavier weight ;
Day sickens round her, and the night
Is empty of repose.

In sleep She sometimes walked abroad,
Deep sighs with quick words blending,
Like that pale Queen whose hands are seen
With fancied spots contending ;
But *she* is innocent of blood,—
The moon is not more pure
That shines aloft, while through the wood
She thrids her way, the sounding Flood
Her melancholy lure !

While 'mid the fern-brake sleeps the doe,
And owls alone are waking,
In white arrayed, glides on the Maid
The downward pathway taking,
That leads her to the torrent's side
And to a holly bower ;
By whom on this still night desried ?
By whom in that lone place espied ?
By thee, Sir Eglamore !

A wandering Ghost, so thinks the Knight,
His coming step has thwarted,
Beneath the boughs that heard their vows,
Within whose shade they parted.
Hush, hush, the busy Sleeper see !
Perplexed her fingers seem,
As if they from the holly tree
Green twigs would pluck, as rapidly
Flung from her to the stream.

What means the Spectre ? Why intent
To violate the Tree,
Thought Eglamore, by which I swore
Unfading constancy ?
Here am I, and to-morrow's sun,
To her I left, shall prove
That bliss is ne'er so surely won
As when a circuit has been run
Of valour, truth, and love.

So from the spot whereon he stood,
He moved with stealthy pace ;
And, drawing nigh, with his living eye,
He recognised the face ;
And whispers caught, and speeches small,
Some to the green-leaved tree,
Some muttered to the torrent-fall ;—
" Roar on, and bring him with thy call ;
" I heard, and so may He ! "

Soul-shattered was the Knight, nor knew
If Emma's Ghost it were,
Or boding Shade, or if the Maid
Her very self stood there.
He touched ; what followed who shall tell ?
The soft touch snapped the thread
Of slumber—shrieking back she fell,
And the Stream whirled her down the dell
Along its foaming bed.

In plunged the Knight !—when on firm ground
The rescued Maiden lay,
Her eyes grew bright with blissful light,
Confusion passed away ;
She heard, ere to the throne of grace
Her faithful Spirit flew,
His voice—beheld his speaking face ;
And, dying, from his own embrace,
She felt that he was true.

So was he reconciled to life :
Brief words may speak the rest ;
Within the dell he built a cell,
And there was Sorrow's guest ;
In hermits' weeds repose he found,
From vain temptations free ;
Beside the torrent dwelling—bound
By one deep heart-controlling sound,
And awed to piety.

Wild stream of Aira, hold thy course,
Nor fear memorial lays,
Where clouds that spread in solemn shade,
Are edged with golden rays !

Dear art thou to the light of heaven,
 Though minister of sorrow ;
 Sweet is thy voice at pensive even ;
 And thou, in lovers' hearts forgiven,
 Shalt take thy place with Yarrow !

1833.

XLVII.

TO CORDELIA M———,

HALLSTEADS, ULLSWATER.

Nor in the mines beyond the western main,
 You say, Cordelia, was the metal sought,
 Which a fine skill, of Indian growth, has wrought
 Into this flexible yet faithful Chain ;
 Nor is it silver of romantic Spain
 But from our loved Helvellyn's depths was brought,
 Our own domestic mountain. Thing and thought
 Mix strangely ; trifles light, and partly vain,
 Can prop, as you have learnt, our nobler being :
 Yes, Lady, while about your neck is wound

(Your casual glance oft meeting) this bright cord
 What witchery, for pure gifts of inward seeing,
 Lurks in it, Memory's Helper, Fancy's Lord,
 For precious tremblings in your bosom found !

XLVIII.

Most sweet it is with unuplifted eyes
 To pace the ground, if path be there or none,
 While a fair region round the traveller lies
 Which he forbears again to look upon ;
 Pleased rather with some soft ideal scene,
 The work of Fancy, or some happy tone
 Of meditation, slipping in between
 The beauty coming and the beauty gone.
 If Thought and Love desert us, from that day
 Let us break off all commerce with the Muse :
 With Thought and Love companions of our way,
 Whate'er the senses take or may refuse,
 The Mind's internal heaven shall shed her dew
 Of inspiration on the humblest lay.

POEMS OF SENTIMENT AND REFLECTION.

I.

EXPOSTULATION AND REPLY.

"WHY, William, on that old grey stone,
Thus for the length of half a day,
Why, William, sit you thus alone,
And dream your time away?

Where are your books?—that light bequeathed
To Beings else forlorn and blind!
Up! up! and drink the spirit breathed
From dead men to their kind.

You look round on your Mother Earth,
As if she for no purpose bore you;
As if you were her first-born birth,
And none had lived before you!"

One morning thus, by Esthwaite lake,
When life was sweet, I knew not why,
To me my good friend Matthew spake,
And thus I made reply.

"The eye—it cannot choose but see;
We cannot bid the ear be still;
Our bodies feel, where'er they be,
Against or with our will.

Nor less I deem that there are Powers
Which of themselves our minds impress;
That we can feed this mind of ours
In a wise passiveness.

Think you, 'mid all this mighty sun
Of things for ever speaking,
That nothing of itself will come,
But we must still be seeking?

—Then ask not wherefore, here, alone,
Conversing as I may,
I sit upon this old grey stone,
And dream my time away."

II.

THE TABLES TURNED.

AN EVENING SCENE ON THE SAME SUBJECT.

Up! up! my Friend, and quit your books;
Or surely you'll grow double:
Up! up! my Friend, and clear your looks;
Why all this toil and trouble?

The sun, above the mountain's head,
A freshening lustre mellow
Through all the long green fields has spread,
His first sweet evening yellow.

Books! 'tis a dull and endless strife:
Come, hear the woodland linnet,
How sweet his music! on my life,
There's more of wisdom in it.

And hark! how blithe the throstle sings!
He, too, is no mean preacher:
Come forth into the light of things,
Let Nature be your teacher.

She has a world of ready wealth,
Our minds and hearts to bless—
Spontaneous wisdom breathed by health,
Truth breathed by cheerfulness.

One impulse from a vernal wood
May teach you more of man,
Of moral evil and of good,
Than all the sages can.

Sweet is the lore which Nature brings;
Our meddling intellect
Mis-shapes the beauteous forms of things:—
We murder to dissect.

Enough of Science and of Art;
Close up those barren leaves;
Come forth, and bring with you a heart
That watches and receives.

III.

LINES WRITTEN IN EARLY SPRING.

I HEARD a thousand blended notes,
While in a grove I sate reclined,
In that sweet mood when pleasant thoughts
Bring sad thoughts to the mind.

To her fair works did Nature link
The human soul that through me ran ;
And much it grieved my heart to think
What man has made of man.

Through primrose tufts, in that green bower,
The periwinkle trailed its wreaths ;
And 'tis my faith that every flower
Enjoys the air it breathes.

The birds around me hopped and played,
Their thoughts I cannot measure :—
But the least motion which they made,
It seemed a thrill of pleasure.

The budding twigs spread out their fan,
To catch the breezy air ;
And I must think, do all I can,
That there was pleasure there.

If this belief from heaven be sent,
If such be Nature's holy plan,
Have I not reason to lament
What man has made of man ?

1798.

IV.

A CHARACTER.

I MARVEL how Nature could ever find space
For so many strange contrasts in one human face :
There's thought and no thought, and there's paleness and bloom
And bustle and sluggishness, pleasure and gloom.

There's weakness, and strength both redundant
and vain ;
Such strength as, if ever affliction and pain
Could pierce through a temper that 's soft to disease,
Would be rational peace—a philosopher's ease.

There's indifference, alike when he fails or succeeds,
And attention full ten times as much as there needs ;
Pride where there's no envy, there's so much of joy ;
And mildness, and spirit both forward and coy.

There's freedom, and sometimes a diffident stare
Of shame scarcely seeming to know that she's there
There's virtue, the title it surely may claim,
Yet wants heaven knows what to be worthy the name

This picture from nature may seem to depart,
Yet the Man would at once run away with your
heart ;

And I for five centuries right gladly would be
Such an odd such a kind happy creature as he.

1800.

V.

TO MY SISTER.

It is the first mild day of March :
Each minute sweeter than before
The redbreast sings from the tall larch
That stands beside our door.

There is a blessing in the air,
Which seems a sense of joy to yield
To the bare trees, and mountains bare,
And grass in the green field.

My sister ! ('tis a wish of mine)
Now that our morning meal is done,
Make haste, your morning task resign ;
Come forth and feel the sun.

Edward will come with you ;—and, pray,
Put on with speed your woodland dress ;
And bring no book : for this one day
We'll give to idleness.

No joyless forms shall regulate
Our living calendar :
We from to-day, my Friend, will date
The opening of the year.

Love, now a universal birth,
From heart to heart is stealing,
From earth to man, from man to earth :
—It is the hour of feeling.

One moment now may give us more
Than years of toiling reason :
Our minds shall drink at every pore
The spirit of the season.

Some silent laws our hearts will make,
Which they shall long obey :
We for the year to come may take
Our temper from to-day.

And from the blessed power that rolls
About, below, above,
We'll frame the measure of our souls :
They shall be tuned to love.

Then come, my Sister ! come, I pray,
With speed put on your woodland dress ;
And bring no book : for this one day
We'll give to idleness.

1798.

VI. •

SIMON LEE,

THE OLD HUNTSMAN ;

WITH AN INCIDENT IN WHICH HE WAS CONCERNED.

In the sweet shire of Cardigan,
Not far from pleasant Ivor-hall,
An old Man dwells, a little man,—
'Tis said he once was tall.
Full five-and-thirty years he lived
A running huntsman merry ;
And still the centre of his cheek
Is red as a ripe cherry.

No man like him the horn could sound,
And hill and valley rang with glee
When Echo banded, round and round,
The halloo of Simon Lee.
In those proud days, he little cared
For husbandry or tillage ;
To blither tasks did Simon rouse
The sleepers of the village.

He all the country could outrun,
Could leave both man and horse behind ;
And often, ere the chase was done,
He reeled, and was stone-blind.
And still there's something in the world
At which his heart rejoices ;
For when the chiming hounds are out,
He dearly loves their voices !

But, oh the heavy change !—bereft
Of health, strength, friends, and kindred, see !
Old Simon to the world is left
In liveried poverty.
His Master's dead,—and no one now
Dwells in the Hall of Ivor ;
Men, dogs, and horses, all are dead ;
He is the sole survivor.

And he is lean and he is sick ;
His body, dwindled and awry,
Rests upon ankles swoln and thick ;
His legs are thin and dry.
One prop he has, and only one,
His wife, an aged woman,
Lives with him, near the waterfall,
Upon the village Common.

Beside their moss-grown hut of clay,
Not twenty paces from the door,
A scrap of land they have, but they
Are poorest of the poor.
This scrap of land he from the heath
Enclosed when he was stronger ;
But what to them avails the land
Which he can till no longer ?

Of, working by her Husband's side,
Ruth does what Simon cannot do ;
For she, with scanty cause for pride,
Is stouter of the two.
And, though you with your utmost skill
From labour could not wean them,
'Tis little, very little—all
That they can do between them.

Few months of life has he in store
As he to you will tell,
For still, the more he works, the more
Do his weak ankles swell.
My gentle Reader, I perceive
How patiently you've waited,
And now I fear that you expect
Some tale will be related.

O Reader ! had you in your mind
Such stores as silent thought can bring,
O gentle Reader ! you would find
A tale in every thing.
What more I have to say is short,
And you must kindly take it :
It is no tale ; but, should you think,
Perhaps a tale you'll make it.

One summer-day I chanced to see
This old Man doing all he could
To unearth the root of an old tree,
A stump of rotten wood.
The mattock tottered in his hand ;
So vain was his endeavour,
That at the root of the old tree
He might have worked for ever.

"You're overtasked, good Simon Lee,
Give me your tool," to him I said;
And at the word right gladly he
Received my proffered aid.
I struck, and with a single blow
The tangled root I severed,
At which the poor old Man so long
And vainly had endeavoured.

The tears into his eyes were brought,
And thanks and praises seemed to run
So fast out of his heart, I thought
They never would have done.
—I've heard of hearts unkind, kind deeds
With coldness still returning;
Alas! the gratitude of men
Hath oftener left me mourning.

1799.

VII.

WRITTEN IN GERMANY,

ON ONE OF THE COLDEST DAYS OF THE CENTURY.

The Reader must be apprised, that the Stoves in North-Germany generally have the impression of a galloping horse upon them, this being part of the Brunswick Arms.

A PLAGUE on your languages, German and Norse!
Let me have the song of the kettle;
And the tongs and the poker, instead of that horse
That gallops away with such fury and force
On this dreary dull plate of black metal.

See that Fly,—a disconsolate creature! perhaps
A child of the field or the grove;
And, sorrow for him! the dull treacherous heat
Has seduced the poor fool from his winter retreat,
And he creeps to the edge of my stove.

Alas! how he fumbles about the domains
Which this comfortless oven environ!
He cannot find out in what track he must crawl,
Now back to the tiles, then in search of the wall,
And now on the brink of the iron.

Stock-still there he stands like a traveller bemazed:
The best of his skill he has tried;
His feelers, methinks, I can see him put forth
To the east and the west, to the south and the
north;
But he finds neither guide-post nor guide.

His spindles sink under him, foot, leg, and thigh!
His eyesight and hearing are lost;
Between life and death his blood freezes and thaws:
And his two pretty pinions of blue dusky gauze
Are glued to his sides by the frost.

No brother, no mate has he near him—while I
Can draw warmth from the cheek of my Love;
As blest and as glad, in this desolate gloom,
As if green summer grass were the floor of my room
And woodbines were hanging above.

Yet, God is my witness, thou small helpless Thing
Thy life I would gladly sustain
Till summer come up from the south, and with
crowds
Of thy brethren a march thou should'st sound
through the clouds.
And back to the forests again!

1799.

VIII.

A POET'S EPITAPH.

ART thou a Statist in the van
Of public conflicts trained and bred?
—First learn to love one living man;
Then may'st thou think upon the dead.

A Lawyer art thou?—draw not nigh!
Go, carry to some fitter place
The keenness of that practised eye,
The hardness of that fallow face.

Art thou a Man of purple cheer?
A rosy Man, right plump to see?
Approach; yet, Doctor, not too near,
This grave no cushion is for thee.

Or art thou one of gallant pride.
A Soldier and no man of chaff?
Welcome!—but lay thy sword aside,
And lean upon a peasant's staff.

Physician art thou? one, all eyes,
Philosopher! a fingering slave,
One that would peep and botanize
Upon his mother's grave?

Wrapt closely in thy sensual fleece,
O turn aside,—and take, I pray,
That he below may rest in peace,
Thy ever-dwindling soul, away!

A Moralist perchance appears;
 Led, Heaven knows how! to this poor sod:
 And he has neither eyes nor ears;
 Himself his world, and his own God;

One to whose smooth-rubbed soul can cling
 Nor form, nor feeling, great or small;
 A reasoning, self-sufficing thing,
 An intellectual All-in-all!

Shut close the door; press down the latch;
 Sleep in thy intellectual crust;
 Nor lose ten tickings of thy watch
 Near this unprofitable dust.

But who is He, with modest looks,
 And clad in homely russet brown?
 He murmurs near the running brooks
 A music sweeter than their own.

He is retired as noontide dew,
 Or fountain in a noon-day grove;
 And you must love him, ere to you
 He will seem worthy of your love.

The outward shows of sky and earth,
 Of hill and valley, he has viewed;
 And impulses of deeper birth
 Have come to him in solitude.

In common things that round us lie
 Some random truths he can impart,—
 The harvest of a quiet eye
 That broods and sleeps on his own heart.

But he is weak; both Man and Boy,
 Hath been an idler in the land;
 Contented if he might enjoy
 The things which others understand.

—Come hither in thy hour of strength;
 Come, weak as is a breaking wave!
 Here stretch thy body at full length;
 Or build thy house upon this grave.

IX.

TO THE DAISY.

BRIGHT Flower! whose home is everywhere,
 Bold in maternal Nature's care,
 And all the long year through the heir
 Of joy or sorrow.

Methinks that there abides in thee
 Some concord with humanity,
 Given to no other flower I see
 The forest thorough!

Is it that Man is soon deprest?
 A thoughtless Thing! who, once unblest,
 Does little on his memory rest,
 Or on his reason,
 And Thou would'st teach him how to find
 A shelter under every wind,
 A hope for times that are unkind
 And every season?

Thou wander'st the wide world about,
 Uncheck'd by pride or scrupulous doubt,
 With friends to greet thee, or without,
 Yet pleased and willing;
 Meek, yielding to the occasion's call,
 And all things suffering from all,
 Thy function apostolical
 In peace fulfilling.

1803.

X.

MATTHEW.

In the School of—— is a tablet, on which are inscribed, in gilt letters, the Names of the several persons who have been School-masters there since the foundation of the School, with the time at which they entered upon and quitted their office. Opposite to one of those Names the Author wrote the following lines.

IF Nature, for a favourite child,
 In thee hath tempered so her clay,
 That every hour thy heart runs wild,
 Yet never once doth go astray,

Read o'er these lines; and then review
 This tablet, that thus humbly rears
 In such diversity of hue
 Its history of two hundred years.

—When through this little wreck of fame,
 Cipher and syllable! thine eye
 Has travelled down to Matthew's name,
 Pause with no common sympathy.

And, if a sleeping tear should wake,
 Then be it neither checked nor stayed:
 For Matthew a request I make
 Which for himself he had not made.

1799.

Poor Matthew, all his frolics o'er,
Is silent as a standing pool;
Far from the chimney's merry roar,
And murmur of the village school.

The sighs which Matthew heaved were sighs
Of one tired out with fun and madness;
The tears which came to Matthew's eyes
Were tears of light, the dew of gladness.

Yet, sometimes, when the secret cup
Of still and serious thought went round,
It seemed as if he drank it up—
He felt with spirit so profound.

—Thou soul of God's best earthly mould!
Thou happy Soul! and can it be
That these two words of glittering gold
Are all that must remain of thee?

1799.

XI.

THE TWO APRIL MORNINGS.

WE walked along, while bright and red
Uprose the morning sun;
And Matthew stopped, he looked, and said,
"The will of God be done!"

A village schoolmaster was he,
With hair of glittering grey;
As blithe a man as you could see
On a spring holiday.

And on that morning, through the grass,
And by the steaming rills,
We travelled merrily, to pass
A day among the hills.

"Our work," said I, "was well begun,
Then, from thy breast what thought,
Beneath so beautiful a sun,
So sad a sigh has brought?"

A second time did Matthew stop;
And fixing still his eye
Upon the eastern mountain-top,
To me he made reply:

"Yon cloud with that long purple cleft
Brings fresh into my mind
A day like this which I have left
Full thirty years behind.

And just above yon slope of corn
Such colours, and no other,
Were in the sky, that April morn,
Of this the very brother.

With rod and line I sued the sport
Which that sweet season gave,
And, to the church-yard come, stopped short
Beside my daughter's grave.

Nine summers had she scarcely seen,
The pride of all the vale;
And then she sang;—she would have been
A very nightingale.

Six feet in earth my Emma lay;
And yet I loved her more,
For so it seemed, than till that day
I e'er had loved before.

And, turning from her grave, I met,
Beside the churchyard yew,
A blooming Girl, whose hair was wet
With points of morning dew.

A basket on her head she bare;
Her brow was smooth and white:
To see a child so very fair,
It was a pure delight!

No fountain from its rocky cave
E'er tripped with foot so free;
She seemed as happy as a wave
That dances on the sea.

There came from me a sigh of pain
Which I could ill confine;
I looked at her, and looked again:
And did not wish her mine!"

Matthew is in his grave, yet now,
Methinks, I see him stand,
As at that moment, with a bough
Of wilding in his hand.

1799.

XII.

THE FOUNTAIN.

A CONVERSATION.

WE talked with open heart, and tongue
Affectionate and true,
A pair of friends, though I was young,
And Matthew seventy-two.

We lay beneath a spreading oak,
Beside a mossy seat ;
And from the turf a fountain broke,
And gurgled at our feet.

"Now, Matthew !" said I, "let us match
This water's pleasant tune
With some old border-song, or catch
That suits a summer's noon ;

Or of the church-clock and the chimes
Sing here beneath the shade,
That half-mad thing of witty rhymes
Which you last April made !"

In silence Matthew lay, and eyed
The spring beneath the tree ;
And thus the dear old Man replied,
The grey-haired man of glee :

"No check, no stay, this Streamlet fears ;
How merrily it goes !
Twill murmur on a thousand years,
And flow as now it flows.

And here, on this delightful day,
I cannot choose but think
How oft, a vigorous man, I lay
Beside this fountain's brink.

My eyes are dim with childish tears,
My heart is idly stirred,
For the same sound is in my ears
Which in those days I heard.

Thus fares it still in our decay :
And yet the wiser mind
Mourns less for what age takes away
Than what it leaves behind.

The blackbird amid leafy trees,
The lark above the hill,
Let loose their carols when they please,
Are quiet when they will.

With Nature never do *they* wage
A foolish strife ; they see
A happy youth, and their old age
Is beautiful and free :

But we are pressed by heavy laws ;
And often, glad no more,
We wear a face of joy, because
We have been glad of yore.

If there be one who need bemoan
His kindred laid in earth,
The household hearts that were his own ;
It is the man of mirth.

My days, my Friend, are almost gone,
My life has been approved,
And many love me ; but by none
Am I enough beloved."

"Now both himself and me he wrongs,
The man who thus complains !
I live and sing my idle songs
Upon these happy plains ;

And, Matthew, for thy children dead
I'll be a son to thee !"
At this he grasped my hand, and said,
"Alas ! that cannot be."

We rose up from the fountain-side ;
And down the smooth descent
Of the green sheep-track did we glide ;
And through the wood we went ;

And, ere we came to Leonard's rock,
He sang those witty rhymes
About the crazy old church-clock,
And the bewildered chimes.

1799.

XIII.

PERSONAL TALK.

I.

I AM not One who much or oft delight
To season my fireside with personal talk,—
Of friends, who live within an easy walk,
Or neighbours, daily, weekly, in my sight :
And, for my chance-acquaintance, ladies bright,
Sons, mothers, maidens withering on the stalk,
These all wear out of me, like Forms, with chalk
Painted on rich men's floors, for one feast-night.
Better than such discourse doth silence long,
Long, barren silence, square with my desire ;
To sit without emotion, hope, or aim,
In the loved presence of my cottage-fire,
And listen to the flapping of the flame,
Or kettle whispering its faint undersong.

II.

"Yet life," you say, "is life; we have seen and see,
 And with a living pleasure we describe;
 And fits of sprightly malice do but bribe
 The languid mind into activity.
 Sound sense, and love itself, and mirth and glee
 Are fostered by the comment and the gibe."
 Even be it so: yet still among your tribe,
 Our daily world's true Worldlings, rank not me!
 Children are blest, and powerful; their world lies
 More justly balanced; partly at their feet,
 And part far from them:—sweetest melodies
 Are those that are by distance made more sweet;
 Whose mind is but the mind of his own eyes,
 He is a Slave; the meanest we can meet!

III.

Wings have we,—and as far as we can go
 We may find pleasure: wilderness and wood,
 Blank ocean and mere sky, support that mood
 Which with the lofty sanctifies the low.
 Dreams, books, are each a world; and books, we
 know,
 Are a substantial world, both pure and good:
 Round these, with tendrils strong as flesh and blood,
 Our pastime and our happiness will grow.
 There find I personal themes, a plenteous store,
 Matter wherein right voluble I am,
 To which I listen with a ready ear;
 Two shall be named, pre-eminently dear,—
 The gentle Lady married to the Moor;
 And heavenly Una with her milk-white Lamb.

IV.

Nor can I not believe but that hereby
 Great gains are mine; for thus I live remote
 From evil-speaking; rancour, never sought,
 Comes to me not; malignant truth, or lie.
 Hence have I genial seasons, hence have I
 Smooth passions, smooth discourse, and joyous
 thought:
 And thus from day to day my little boat
 Rocks in its harbour, lodging peaceably.
 Blessings be with them—and eternal praise,
 Who gave us nobler loves, and nobler cares—
 The Poets, who on earth have made us heirs
 Of truth and pure delight by heavenly lays!
 Oh! might my name be numbered among theirs,
 Then gladly would I end my mortal days.

XIV.

TO THE SPADE OF A FRIEND.

(AN AGRICULTURIST.)

COMPOSED WHILE WE WERE LABOURING TOGETHER IN
HIS PLEASURE-GROUND.

SPADE! with which Wilkinson hath tilled his lands
 And shaped these pleasant walks by Emont's side,
 Thou art a tool of honour in my hands;
 I press thee, through the yielding soil, with pride

Rare master has it been thy lot to know;
 Long hast Thou served a man to reason true;
 Whose life combines the best of high and low,
 The labouring many and the resting few;

Health, meekness, ardour, quietness secure,
 And industry of body and of mind;
 And elegant enjoyments, that are pure
 As nature is;—too pure to be refined.

Here often hast Thou heard the Poet sing
 In concord with his river murmuring by;
 Or in some silent field, while timid spring
 Is yet uncheered by other minstrelsy.

Who shall inherit Thee when death has laid
 Low in the darksome cell thine own dear lord!
 That man will have a trophy, humble Spade!
 A trophy nobler than a conqueror's sword.

If he be one that feels, with skill to part
 False praise from true, or, greater from the less,
 Thee will he welcome to his hand and heart,
 Thou monument of peaceful happiness!

He will not dread with Thee a toilsome day—
 Thee his loved servant, his inspiring mate!
 And, when thou art past service, worn away,
 No dull oblivious nook shall hide thy fate.

His thrift thy uselessness will never scorn;
 An heir-loom in his cottage wilt thou be:—
 High will he hang thee up, well pleased to adorn
 His rustic chimney with the last of Thee!

XV.

A NIGHT THOUGHT.

Lo! where the Moon along the sky
Sails with her happy destiny ;
Oft is she hid from mortal eye
Or dimly seen,
But when the clouds asunder fly
How bright her mien !

Far different we—a froward race,
Thousands though rich in Fortune's grace
With cherished sullenness of pace
Their way pursue,
Ingrates who wear a smileless face
The whole year through.

If kindred humours e'er would make
My spirit droop for drooping's sake,
From Fancy following in thy wake,
Bright ship of heaven !
A counter impulse let me take
And be forgiven.

XVI.

INCIDENT

CHARACTERISTIC OF A FAVOURITE DOG.

His morning rounds the Master
Sees to learn how all things fare ;
Searches pasture after pasture,
Peeps and cattle eyes with care ;
And, for silence or for talk,
Hath comrades in his walk ;
His dogs, each pair of different breed,
Distinguished two for scent, and two for speed.

Saw a hare before him started !
Off they fly in earnest chase ;
Every dog is eager-hearted,
And the four are in the race :
And the hare whom they pursue,
Knows from instinct what to do ;
Her hope is near : no turn she makes ;
Like an arrow, to the river takes.

Up the river was, and crusted
Truly by a one night's frost ;
And the nimble Hare hath trusted
The ice, and safely crost ;
She hath crost, and without heed
Are following at full speed,
When, lo ! the ice, so thinly spread,
Broke—and the greyhound, DART, is over-head !

Better fate have PRINCE and SWALLOW—
See them cleaving to the sport !
Music has no heart to follow,
Little Music, she stops short.
She hath neither wish nor heart,
Hers is now another part :
A loving creature she, and brave !
And fondly strives her struggling friend to save.

From the brink her paws she stretches,
Very hands as you would say !
And afflicting moans she fetches,
As he breaks the ice away.
For herself she hath no fears,—
Him alone she sees and fears,—
Makes efforts with complainings ; nor gives o'er
Until her fellow sinks to re-appear no more.

1805.

XVII.

TRIBUTE

TO THE MEMORY OF THE SAME DOG.

LIE here, without a record of thy worth,
Beneath a covering of the common earth !
It is not from unwillingness to praise,
Or want of love, that here no Stone we raise ;
More thou deserv'st ; but *this* man gives to man,
Brother to brother, *this* is all we can.
Yet they to whom thy virtues made thee dear
Shall find thee through all changes of the year :
This Oak points out thy grave ; the silent tree
Will gladly stand a monument of thee.

We grieved for thee, and wished thy end were
past ;

And willingly have laid thee here at last :
For thou hadst lived till every thing that cheers
In thee had yielded to the weight of years ;
Extreme old age had wasted thee away,
And left thee but a glimmering of the day ;
Thy ears were deaf, and feeble were thy knees,—
I saw thee stagger in the summer breeze,
Too weak to stand against its sportive breath,
And ready for the gentlest stroke of death.
It came, and we were glad ; yet tears were shed ;
Both man and woman wept when thou wert dead ;
Not only for a thousand thoughts that were,
Old household thoughts, in which thou hadst thy
share ;

But for some precious boons vouchsafed to thee,
Found scarcely any where in like degree !
For love, that comes wherever life and sense
Are given by God, in thee was most intense ;

A chain of heart, a feeling of the mind,
 A tender sympathy, which did thee bind
 Not only to us Men, but to thy Kind:
 Yea, for thy fellow-brutes in thee we saw
 A soul of love, love's intellectual law:—
 Hence, if we wept, it was not done in shame;
 Our tears from passion and from reason came,
 And, therefore, shalt thou be an honoured name!

1805.

XVIII.

FIDELITY.

A BARKING sound the Shepherd hears,
 A cry as of a dog or fox;
 He halts—and searches with his eyes
 Among the scattered rocks:
 And now at distance can discern
 A stirring in a brake of fern;
 And instantly a dog is seen,
 Glancing through that covert green.

The Dog is not of mountain breed;
 Its motions, too, are wild and shy;
 With something, as the Shepherd thinks,
 Unusual in its cry:
 Nor is there any one in sight
 All round, in hollow or on height;
 Nor shout, nor whistle strikes his ear;
 What is the creature doing here?

It was a cove, a huge recess,
 That keeps, till June, December's snow;
 A lofty precipice in front,
 A silent tarn* below!
 Far in the bosom of Helvellyn,
 Remote from public road or dwelling,
 Pathway, or cultivated land;
 From trace of human foot or hand.

There sometimes doth a leaping fish
 Send through the tarn a lonely cheer;
 The crags repeat the raven's croak,
 In symphony austere;
 Thither the rainbow comes—the cloud—
 And mists that spread the flying shroud;
 And sunbeams; and the sounding blast,
 That, if it could, would hurry past;
 But that enormous barrier holds it fast.

* Tarn is a *small Mere* or Lake, mostly high up in the mountains.

Not free from boding thoughts, a while
 The Shepherd stood; then makes his way
 O'er rocks and stones, following the Dog
 As quickly as he may;
 Nor far had gone before he found
 A human skeleton on the ground;
 The appalled Discoverer with a sigh
 Looks round, to learn the history.

From those abrupt and perilous rocks
 The Man had fallen, that place of fear!
 At length upon the Shepherd's mind
 It breaks, and all is clear:
 He instantly recalled the name,
 And who he was, and whence he came;
 Remembered, too, the very day
 On which the Traveller passed this way.

But hear a wonder, for whose sake
 This lamentable tale I tell!
 A lasting monument of words
 This wonder merits well.
 The Dog, which still was hovering nigh,
 Repeating the same timid cry,
 This Dog, had been through three months' space
 A dweller in that savage place.

Yes, proof was plain that, since the day
 When this ill-fated Traveller died,
 The Dog had watched about the spot,
 Or by his master's side:
 How nourished here through such long time
 He knows, who gave that love sublime;
 And gave that strength of feeling, great
 Above all human estimate!

1805.

XIX.

ODE TO DUTY.

'Jam non consilio bonus, sed more eductus, ut no-
 tantum rectè facere possim, sed nisi rectè facere no-
 possim.'

STERN Daughter of the Voice of God!
 O Duty! if that name thou love
 Who art a light to guide, a rod
 To check the erring, and reprove;
 Thou, who art victory and law
 When empty terrors overawe;
 From vain temptations dost set free;
 And calm'st the weary strife of frail humanity!

There are who ask not if thine eye
Be on them ; who, in love and truth,
Where no misgiving is, rely
Upon the genial sense of youth :
Had Hearts ! without reproach or blot ;
Who do thy work, and know it not :
Oh ! if through confidence misplaced
They fail, thy saving arms, dread Power ! around
them cast.

ereene will be our days and bright,
and happy will our nature be,
When love is an unerring light,
and joy its own security.
and they a blissful course may hold
even now, who, not unwisely bold,
live in the spirit of this creed ;
et seek thy firm support, according to their need.

loving freedom, and untried ;
to sport of every random gust,
et being to myself a guide,
to blindly have reposed my trust :
and oft, when in my heart was heard
thy timely mandate, I deferred
my task, in smoother walks to stray ;
but thee I now would serve more strictly, if I may.

rough no disturbance of my soul,
strong compunction in me wrought,
supplicate for thy control ;
et in the quietness of thought :
to this unchartered freedom tires ;
feel the weight of chance-desires :
thopes no more must change their name,
long for a repose that ever is the same.

rn Lawgiver ! yet thou dost wear
the Godhead's most benignant grace ;
to know we any thing so fair
is the smile upon thy face :
Thy laugh before thee on their beds
and fragrance in thy footing treads ;
Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong ;
and the most ancient heavens, through Thee, are
fresh and strong.

Thumbler functions, awful Power !
I call thee : I myself commend
To thy guidance from this hour ;
Let my weakness have an end !
Be unto me, made lowly wise,
The spirit of self-sacrifice ;
The confidence of reason give ;
And in the light of truth thy Bondman let me live !

1805.

xx.

CHARACTER OF THE HAPPY WARRIOR.

Who is the happy Warrior ? Who is he
That every man in arms should wish to be ?
—It is the generous Spirit, who, when brought
Among the tasks of real life, hath wrought
Upon the plan that pleased his boyish thought :
Whose high endeavours are an inward light
That makes the path before him always bright :
Who, with a natural instinct to discern
What knowledge can perform, is diligent to learn ;
Abides by this resolve, and stops not there,
But makes his moral being his prime care ;
Who, doomed to go in company with Pain,
And Fear, and Bloodshed, miserable train !
Turns his necessity to glorious gain ;
In face of these doth exercise a power
Which is our human nature's highest dower ;
Controls them and subdues, transmutes, bereaves
Of their bad influence, and their good receives :
By objects, which might force the soul to abate
Her feeling, rendered more compassionate ;
Is placable—because occasions rise
So often that demand such sacrifice ;
More skilful in self-knowledge, even more pure,
As tempted more ; more able to endure,
As more exposed to suffering and distress ;
Thence, also, more alive to tenderness.
—'Tis he whose law is reason ; who depends
Upon that law as on the best of friends ;
Whence, in a state where men are tempted still
To evil for a guard against worse ill,
And what in quality or act is best
Doth seldom on a right foundation rest,
He labours good on good to fix, and owes
To virtue every triumph that he knows :
—Who, if he rise to station of command,
Rises by open means ; and there will stand
On honourable terms, or else retire,
And in himself possess his own desire ;
Who comprehends his trust, and to the same
Keeps faithful with a singleness of aim ;
And therefore does not stoop, nor lie in wait
For wealth, or honours, or for worldly state ;
Whom they must follow ; on whose head must fall,
Like showers of manna, if they come at all :
Whose powers shed round him in the common strife,
Or mild concerns of ordinary life,
A constant influence, a peculiar grace ;
But who, if he be called upon to face
Some awful moment to which Heaven has joined
Great issues, good or bad for human kind,

B B 2

Is happy as a Lover ; and attired
 With sudden brightness, like a Man inspired ;
 And, through the heat of conflict, keeps the law
 In calmness made, and sees what he foresaw ;
 Or if an unexpected call succeed,
 Come when it will, is equal to the need :
 —He who, though thus endued as with a sense
 And faculty for storm and turbulence,
 Is yet a Soul whose master-bias leans
 To homefelt pleasures and to gentle scenes ;
 Sweet images ! which, wheresoe'er he be,
 Are at his heart ; and such fidelity
 It is his darling passion to approve ;
 More brave for this, that he hath much to love :—
 'Tis, finally, the Man, who, lifted high,
 Conspicuous object in a Nation's eye,
 Or left unthought-of in obscurity,—
 Who, with a toward or untoward lot,
 Prosperous or adverse, to his wish or not—
 Plays, in the many games of life, that one
 Where what he most doth value must be won :
 Whom neither shape of danger can dismay,
 Nor thought of tender happiness betray ;
 Who, not content that former worth stand fast,
 Looks forward, persevering to the last,
 From well to better, daily self-surpast :
 Who, whether praise of him must walk the earth
 For ever, and to noble deeds give birth,
 Or he must fall, to sleep without his fame,
 And leave a dead unprofitable name—
 Finds comfort in himself and in his cause ;
 And, while the mortal mist is gathering, draws
 His breath in confidence of Heaven's applause :
 This is the happy Warrior ; this is He
 That every Man in arms should wish to be.

1806.

XXI.

THE FORCE OF PRAYER * ;

OR,

THE FOUNDING OF BOLTON PRIORY.

A TRADITION.

“What is good for a bootless bene ?”

With these dark words begins my Tale ;
 And their meaning is, whence can comfort spring
 When Prayer is of no avail ?

“What is good for a bootless bene ?”

The Falconer to the Lady said ;
 And she made answer “ENDLESS SORROW !”
 For she knew that her Son was dead.

* See the White Doe of Rylstone.

She knew it by the Falconer's words,
 And from the look of the Falconer's eye ;
 And from the love which was in her soul
 For her youthful Romilly.

—Young Romilly through Barden woods
 Is ranging high and low ;
 And holds a greyhound in a leash,
 To let slip upon buck or doe.

The pair have reached that fearful chasm,
 How tempting to bestride !
 For lordly Wharf is there pent in
 With rocks on either side.

This striding-place is called THE STRID,
 A name which it took of yore :
 A thousand years hath it borne that name,
 And shall a thousand more.

And hither is young Romilly come,
 And what may now forbid
 That he, perhaps for the hundredth time,
 Shall bound across THE STRID ?

He sprang in glee,—for what cared he
 That the river was strong, and the rocks were
 steep ?—
 But the greyhound in the leash hung back,
 And checked him in his leap.

The Boy is in the arms of Wharf,
 And strangled by a merciless force ;
 For never more was young Romilly seen
 Till he rose a lifeless corse.

Now there is stillness in the vale,
 And long, unspeaking, sorrow :
 Wharf shall be to pitying hearts
 A name more sad than Yarrow.

If for a lover the Lady wept,
 A solace she might borrow
 From death, and from the passion of death ;—
 Old Wharf might heal her sorrow.

She weeps not for the wedding-day
 Which was to be to-morrow :
 Her hope was a further-looking hope,
 And hers is a mother's sorrow.

He was a tree that stood alone,
 And proudly did its branches wave ;
 And the root of this delightful tree
 Was in her husband's grave !

ong, long in darkness did she sit,
 and her first words were, "Let there be
 Bolton, on the field of Wharf,
 stately Priory!"

he stately Priory was reared;
 and Wharf, as he moved along,
 to matins joined a mournful voice,
 or failed at even-song.

and the Lady prayed in heaviness
 that looked not for relief!
 but slowly did her succour come,
 and a patience to her grief.

Oh! there is never sorrow of heart
 that shall lack a timely end,
 but to God we turn, and ask
 Him to be our friend!

1808.

XXII.

A FACT, AND AN IMAGINATION;

OR,

CANUTE AND ALFRED, ON THE SEA-SHORE.

The Danish Conqueror, on his royal chair,
 mastering a face of haughty sovereignty,
 to aid a covert purpose, cried—"O ye
 approaching Waters of the deep, that share
 with this green isle my fortunes, come not where
 our Master's throne is set."—Deaf was the Sea;
 her waves rolled on, respecting his decree
 less than they heed a breath of wanton air.
 Then Canute, rising from the invaded throne,
 said to his servile Courtiers,—"Poor the reach,
 the undisguised extent, of mortal sway!
 I only am a King, and he alone
 deserves the name (this truth the billows preach)
 whose everlasting laws, sea, earth, and heaven,
 obey."

This just reproof the prosperous Dane
 drew from the influx of the main,
 or some whose rugged northern mouths would
 strain

oriental flattery;
 and Canute (fact more worthy to be known)
 from that time forth did for his brows disown
 the ostentatious symbol of a crown;
 the seeming earthly royalty
 contemptible as vain.

Now hear what one of elder days,
 each theme of England's fondest praise,

Her darling Alfred, *might* have spoken;
 To cheer the remnant of his host
 When he was driven from coast to coast,
 Distressed and harassed, but with mind unbroken:

"My faithful followers, lo! the tide is spent
 That rose, and steadily advanced to fill
 The shores and channels, working Nature's will
 Among the mazy streams that backward went,
 And in the sluggish pools where ships are pent:
 And now, his task performed, the flood stands still,
 At the green base of many an inland hill,
 In placid beauty and sublime content!
 Such the repose that sage and hero find;
 Such measured rest the sedulous and good
 Of humbler name; whose souls do, like the flood
 Of Ocean, press right on; or gently wind,
 Neither to be diverted nor withstood,
 Until they reach the bounds by Heaven assigned."

1816.

XXIII.

*'A LITTLE onward lend thy guiding hand
 To these dark steps, a little further on!'*

—What trick of memory to *my* voice hath brought
 This mournful iteration? For though Time,
 The Conqueror, crowns the Conquered, on this brow
 Planting his favourite silver diadem,
 Nor he, nor minister of his—intent
 To run before him, hath enrolled me yet,
 Though not unmenaced, among those who lean
 Upon a living staff, with borrowed sight.
 —O my own Dora, my beloved child!
 Should that day come—but hark! the birds salute
 The cheerful dawn, brightening for me the east;
 For me, thy natural leader, once again
 Impatient to conduct thee, not as erst
 A tottering infant, with compliant stoop
 From flower to flower supported; but to curb
 Thy nymph-like step swift-bounding o'er the lawn,
 Along the loose rocks, or the slippery verge
 Of foaming torrents.—From thy orisons
 Come forth; and, while the morning air is yet
 Transparent as the soul of innocent youth,
 Let me, thy happy guide, now point thy way,
 And now precede thee, winding to and fro,
 Till we by perseverance gain the top
 Of some smooth ridge, whose brink precipitous
 Kindles intense desire for powers withheld
 From this corporeal frame; whereon who stands,
 Is seized with strong incitement to push forth
 His arms, as swimmers use, and plunge—dread
 thought,

For pastime plunge—into the ‘abrupt abyss,’
Where ravens spread their plummy vans, at ease !

And yet more gladly thee would I conduct
Through woods and spacious forests,—to behold
There, how the Original of human art,
Heaven-prompted Nature, measures and erects
Her temples, fearless for the stately work,
Though waves, to every breeze, its high-arched roof,
And storms the pillars rock. But we such schools
Of reverential awe will chiefly seek
In the still summer noon, while beams of light,
Reposing here, and in the aisles beyond
Traceably gliding through the dusk, recal
To mind the living presences of nuns ;
A gentle, pensive, white-robed sisterhood,
Whose saintly radiance mitigates the gloom
Of those terrestrial fabrics, where they serve,
To Christ, the Sun of righteousness, espoused.

Now also shall the page of classic lore,
To these glad eyes from bondage freed, again
Lie open ; and the book of Holy Writ,
Again unfolded, passage clear shall yield
To heights more glorious still, and into shades
More awful, where, advancing hand in hand,
We may be taught, O Darling of my care !
To calm the affections, elevate the soul,
And consecrate our lives to truth and love.

1816.

XXIV.

ODE TO LYCORIS.

May, 1817.

I.

An age hath been when Earth was proud
Of lustre too intense
To be sustained ; and Mortals bowed
The front in self-defence.
Who *then*, if Dian’s crescent gleamed,
Or Cupid’s sparkling arrow streamed
While on the wing the Urchin played,
Could fearlessly approach the shade ?
—Enough for one soft vernal day,
If I, a bard of ebbing time,
And nurtured in a fickle clime,
May haunt this hornèd bay ;
Whose amorous water multiplies
The flitting halcyon’s vivid dyes ;
And smooths her liquid breast—to show
These swan-like specks of mountain snow,
White as the pair that slid along the plains
Of heaven, when Venus held the reins !

II.

In youth we love the darksome lawn
Brushed by the owlet’s wing ;
Then, Twilight is preferred to Dawn,
And Autumn to the Spring.
Sad fancies do we then affect,
In luxury of disrespect
To our own prodigal excess
Of too familiar happiness.
Lycoris (if such name befit
Thee, thee my life’s celestial sign !)
When Nature marks the year’s decline,
Be ours to welcome it ;
Pleased with the harvest hope that runs
Before the path of milder suns ;
Pleased while the sylvan world displays
Its ripeness to the feeding gaze ;
Pleased when the sullen winds resound the kn
Of the resplendent miracle.

III.

But something whispers to my heart
That, as we downward tend,
Lycoris ! life requires an *art*
To which our souls must bend ;
A skill—to balance and supply ;
And, ere the flowing fount be dry,
As soon it must, a sense to sip,
Or drink, with no fastidious lip.
Then welcome, above all, the Guest
Whose smiles, diffused o’er land and sea,
Seem to recal the Deity
Of youth into the breast :
May pensive Autumn ne’er present
A claim to her disparagement !
While blossoms and the budding spray
Inspire us in our own decay ;
Still, as we nearer draw to life’s dark goal,
Be hopeful Spring the favourite of the Soul !

XXV.

TO THE SAME.

ENOUGH of climbing toil !—Ambition treads
Here, as ’mid busier scenes, ground steep and rou
Or slippery even to peril ! and each step,
As we for most uncertain recompence
Mount toward the empire of the fickle clouds,
Each weary step, dwarfing the world below,
Induces, for its old familiar sights,
Unacceptable feelings of contempt,
With wonder mixed—that Man could e’er be ti

anxious bondage, to such nice array
 and formal fellowship of petty things !
 Oh ! 'tis the heart that magnifies this life,
 making a truth and beauty of her own ;
 and moss-grown alleys, circumscribing shades,
 and gurgling rills, assist her in the work
 more efficaciously than realms outspread,
 in a map, before the adventurer's gaze—
 Ocean and Earth contending for regard.

The umbrageous woods are left—how far beneath !
 O lo ! where darkness seems to guard the mouth
 of yon wild cave, whose jagged brows are fringed
 with flaccid threads of ivy, in the still
 and sultry air, depending motionless.
 It cool the space within, and not uncheered
 (as whoso enters shall ere long perceive)
 the stealthy influx of the timid day
 struggling with night, such twilight to compose
 Numa loved ; when, in the Egerian grot,
 from the sage Nymph appearing at his wish,
 he gained what'er a regal mind might ask,
 need, of counsel breathed through lips divine.

As long as the heat shall rage, let that dim cave
 protect us, there deciphering as we may
 the Egyptian records ; or the sighs of Earth
 interpreting ; or counting for old Time
 its minutes, by reiterated drops,
 its visible tears, from some invisible source
 that deepens upon fancy—more and more
 drawn toward the centre whence those sighs creep
 to awe the lightness of humanity. [forth
 shutting up thyself within thyself,
 here let me see thee sink into a mood
 of gentler thought, protracted till thine eye
 be calm as water when the winds are gone,
 and no one can tell whither. Dearest Friend !
 who too have known such happy hours together
 that were power granted to replace them (fetched
 from out the pensive shadows where they lie)
 the first warmth of their original sunshine,
 how should I be to use it : passing sweet
 the domains of tender memory !

1817.

XXVI.

SEPTEMBER, 1819.

The sylvan slopes with corn-clad fields
 Are hung, as if with golden shields,
 Bright trophies of the sun !
 Like a fair sister of the sky,
 Unruffled doth the blue lake lie,
 The mountains looking on.

And, sooth to say, yon vocal grove,
 Albeit uninspired by love,
 By love untaught to ring,
 May well afford to mortal ear
 An impulse more profoundly dear
 Than music of the Spring.

For *that* from turbulence and heat
 Proceeds, from some uneasy seat
 In nature's struggling frame,
 Some region of impatient life :
 And jealousy, and quivering strife,
 Therein a portion claim.

This, this is holy ;—while I hear
 These vespers of another year,
 This hymn of thanks and praise,
 My spirit seems to mount above
 The anxieties of human love,
 And earth's precarious days.

But list !—though winter storms be nigh,
 Unchecked is that soft harmony :
 There lives Who can provide
 For all his creatures ; and in Him,
 Even like the radiant Seraphim,
 These choristers confide.

XXVII.

UPON THE SAME OCCASION.

DEPARTING summer hath assumed
 An aspect tenderly illumed,
 The gentlest look of spring ;
 That calls from yonder leafy shade
 Unfaded, yet prepared to fade,
 A timely carolling.

No faint and hesitating trill,
 Such tribute as to winter chill
 The lonely redbreast pays !
 Clear, loud, and lively is the din,
 From social warblers gathering in
 Their harvest of sweet lays.

Nor doth the example fail to cheer
 Me, conscious that my leaf is sere,
 And yellow on the bough :—
 Fall, rosy garlands, from my head !
 Ye myrtle wreaths, your fragrance shed
 Around a younger brow !

Yet will I temperately rejoice ;
Wide is the range, and free the choice
Of discordant themes ;
Which, haply, kindred souls may prize
Not less than vernal ecstasies,
And passion's feverish dreams.

For deathless powers to verse belong,
And they like Demi-gods are strong
On whom the Muses smile ;
But some their function have disclaimed,
Best pleased with what is aptliest framed
To enervate and defile.

Not such the initiatory strains
Committed to the silent plains
In Britain's earliest dawn :
Trembled the groves, the stars grew pale,
While all-too-daringly the veil
Of nature was withdrawn !

Nor such the spirit-stirring note
When the live chords Alcæus smote,
Inflamed by sense of wrong ;
Woe ! woe to Tyrants ! from the lyre
Broke threateningly, in sparkles dire
Of fierce vindictive song.

And not unhallowed was the page
By wingèd Love inscribed, to assuage
The pangs of vain pursuit ;
Love listening while the Lesbian Maid
With finest touch of passion swayed
Her own Æolian lute.

O ye, who patiently explore
The wreck of Herculean lore,
What rapture ! could ye seize
Some Theban fragment, or unroll
One precious, tender-hearted, scroll
Of pure Simonides.

That were, indeed, a genuine birth
Of poesy ; a bursting forth
Of genius from the dust :
What Horace gloried to behold,
What Maro loved, shall we enfold ?
Can haughty Time be just !

1819.

XXVIII.
MEMORY.

A PEN—to register ; a key—
That winds through secret wards ;
Are well assigned to Memory
By allegoric Bards.

As aptly, also, might be given
A Pencil to her hand ;
That, softening objects, sometimes even
Outstrips the heart's demand ;

That smoothes foregone distress, the lines
Of lingering care subdues,
Long-vanished happiness refines,
And clothes in brighter hues ;

Yet, like a tool of Fancy, works
Those Spectres to dilate
That startle Conscience, as she lurks
Within her lonely seat.

O ! that our lives, which flee so fast,
In purity were such,
That not an image of the past
Should fear that pencil's touch !

Retirement then might hourly look
Upon a soothing scene,
Age steal to his allotted nook
Contented and serene ;

With heart as calm as lakes that sleep,
In frosty moonlight glistening ;
Or mountain rivers, where they creep
Along a channel smooth and deep,
To their own far-off murmurs listening.

1823.

XXIX.

THIS LAWN, a carpet all alive
With shadows flung from leaves—to strive
In dance, amid a press
Of sunshine, an apt emblem yields
Of Worldlings revelling in the fields
Of strenuous idleness ;

Less quick the stir when tide and breeze
Encounter, and to narrow seas
Forbid a moment's rest ;
The medley less when boreal Lights
Glance to and fro, like aery Sprites
To feats of arms address !

Yet, spite of all this eager strife,
This ceaseless play, the genuine life
That serves the stedfast hours,
Is in the grass beneath, that grows
Unheeded, and the mute repose
Of sweetly-breathing flowers.

1829.

XXX.

HUMANITY.

[The Rocking-stones, alluded to in the beginning of the following verses, are supposed to have been used, by our British ancestors, both for judicial and religious purposes. Such stones are not uncommonly found, at this day, both in Great Britain and in Ireland.]

WHAT though the Accused, upon his own appeal
To righteous Gods when man has ceased to feel,
Or at a doubting Judge's stern command,
Before the STONE OF POWER no longer stand—
To take his sentence from the balanced Block,
As, at his touch, it rocks, or seems to rock ;
Though, in the depths of sunless groves, no more
The Druid-priest the hallowed Oak adore ;
Yet, for the Initiate, rocks and whispering trees
Do still perform mysterious offices !
And functions dwell in beast and bird that sway
The reasoning mind, or with the fancy play,
Inviting, at all seasons, ears and eyes
To watch for undelusive auguries :—
Not uninspired appear their simplest ways ;
Their voices mount symbolical of praise—
To mix with hymns that Spirits make and hear ;
To and to fallen man their innocence is dear.
Enraptured Art draws from those sacred springs
Streams that reflect the poetry of things !
Where christian Martyrs stand in hues portrayed,
That, might a wish avail, would never fade,
Borne in their hands the lily and the palm
Shed round the altar a celestial calm ;
There, too, behold the lamb and guileless dove
Prest in the tenderness of virgin love
To saintly bosoms !—Glorious is the blending
Of right affections climbing or descending
Along a scale of light and life, with cares
Alternate ; carrying holy thoughts and prayers
Up to the sovereign seat of the Most High ;
Descending to the worm in charity ;
Like those good Angels whom a dream of night
Gave, in the field of Luz, to Jacob's sight
All, while *he* slept, treading the pendent stairs
Earthward or heavenward, radiant messengers,
That, with a perfect will in one accord
Of strict obedience, serve the Almighty Lord ;
And with untired humility forbore
To speed their errand by the wings they wore.

What a fair world were ours for verse to paint,
If Power could live at ease with self-restraint !
Opinion bow before the naked sense
Of the great Vision,—faith in Providence ;

Merciful over all his creatures, just
To the least particle of sentient dust ;
But, fixing by immutable decrees,
Seedtime and harvest for his purposes !
Then would be closed the restless oblique eye
That looks for evil like a treacherous spy ;
Disputes would then relax, like stormy winds
That into breezes sink ; impetuous minds
By discipline endeavour to grow meek
As Truth herself, whom they profess to seek.
Then Genius, shunning fellowship with Pride,
Would braid his golden locks at Wisdom's side ;
Love ebb and flow untroubled by caprice ;
And not alone *harsh* tyranny would cease,
But unoffending creatures find release
From qualified oppression, whose defence
Rests on a hollow plea of recompense ;
Thought-tempered wrongs, for each humane respect
Oft worse to bear, or deadlier in effect.
Witness those glances of indignant scorn
From some high-minded Slave, impelled to spurn
The kindness that would make him less forlorn ;
Or, if the soul to bondage be subdued,
His look of pitiable gratitude !

Alas for thee, bright Galaxy of Isles,
Whose day departs in pomp, returns with smiles—
To greet the flowers and fruitage of a land,
As the sun mounts, by sea-born breezes fanned ;
A land whose azure mountain-tops are seats
For Gods in council, whose green vales, retreats
Fit for the shades of heroes, mingling there
To breathe Elysian peace in upper air.

Though cold as winter, gloomy as the grave,
Stone-walls a prisoner make, but not a slave.
Shall man assume a property in man ?
Lay on the moral will a withering ban ?
Shame that our laws at distance still protect
Enormities, which they at home reject !
'Slaves cannot breathe in England'—yet that
boast

Is but a mockery ! when from coast to coast,
Though *fettered* slave be none, her floors and soil
Groan underneath a weight of slavish toil,
For the poor Many, measured out by rules
Fetched with cupidity from heartless schools,
That to an Idol, falsely called 'the Wealth
Of Nations,' sacrifice a People's health,
Body and mind and soul ; a thirst so keen
Is ever urging on the vast machine
Of sleepless Labour, 'mid whose dizzy wheels
The Power least prized is that which thinks and
feels.

Then, for the pastimes of this delicate age,
 And all the heavy or light vassalage
 Which for their sakes we fasten, as may suit
 Our varying moods, on human kind or brute,
 'Twere well in little, as in great, to pause,
 Lest Fancy trifle with eternal laws.
 Not from his fellows only man may learn
 Rights to compare and duties to discern !
 All creatures and all objects, in degree,
 Are friends and patrons of humanity.
 There are to whom the garden, grove, and field,
 Perpetual lessons of forbearance yield ;
 Who would not lightly violate the grace
 The lowliest flower possesses in its place ;
 Nor shorten the sweet life, too fugitive,
 Which nothing less than Infinite Power could give.

1829.

XXXI.

THOUGHT ON THE SEASONS.

FLATTERED with promise of escape
 From every hurtful blast,
 Spring takes, O sprightly May ! thy shape,
 Her loveliest and her last.

Less fair is summer riding high
 In fierce solstitial power,
 Less fair than when a lenient sky
 Brings on her parting hour.

When earth repays with golden sheaves
 The labours of the plough,
 And ripening fruits and forest leaves
 All brighten on the bough ;

What pensive beauty autumn shows,
 Before she hears the sound
 Of winter rushing in, to close
 The emblematic round !

Such be our Spring, our Summer such ;
 So may our Autumn blend
 With hoary Winter, and Life touch,
 Through heaven-born hope, her end !

1829.

XXXII.

TO ———.

UPON THE BIRTH OF HER FIRST-BORN CHILD, MARCH, 1833.

' Tum porro puer, ut sævis projectus ab undis
 Navita, nudus humi jacet, &c.'—LUCRETIUS.

LIKE a shipwreck'd Sailor tost
 By rough waves on a perilous coast,
 Lies the Babe, in helplessness
 And in tenderest nakedness,
 Flung by labouring nature forth
 Upon the mercies of the earth.
 Can its eyes beseech ?—no more
 Than the hands are free to implore :
 Voice but serves for one brief cry ;
 Plaint was it ? or prophecy
 Of sorrow that will surely come ?
 Omen of man's grievous doom !

But, O Mother ! by the close
 Duly granted to thy throes ;
 By the silent thanks, now tending
 Incense-like to Heaven, descending
 Now to mingle and to move
 With the gush of earthly love,
 As a debt to that frail Creature,
 Instrument of struggling Nature
 For the blissful calm, the peace
 Known but to this *one* release—
 Can the pitying spirit doubt
 That for human-kind springs out
 From the penalty a sense
 Of more than mortal recompense ?

As a floating summer cloud,
 Though of gorgeous drapery proud,
 To the sun-burnt traveller,
 Or the stooping labourer,
 Oft-times makes its bounty known
 By its shadow round him thrown ;
 So, by chequerings of sad cheer,
 Heavenly Guardians, brooding near,
 Of their presence tell—too bright
 Haply for corporeal sight !
 Ministers of grace divine
 Feelingly their brows incline
 O'er this seeming Castaway
 Breathing, in the light of day,
 Something like the faintest breath
 That has power to baffle death—
 Beautiful, while very weakness
 Captivates like passive meekness.

And, sweet Mother ! under warrant
Of the universal Parent,
Who repays in season due
Them who have, like thee, been true
To the filial chain let down
From his everlasting throne,
Angels hovering round thy couch,
With their softest whispers vouch,
That—whatever griefs may fret,
Cares entangle, sins beset,
This thy First-born, and with tears
Stain her cheek in future years—
Heavenly succour, not denied
To the babe, whate'er betide,
Will to the woman be supplied !

Mother ! blest be thy calm ease ;
Blest the starry promises,—
And the firmament benign
Hallowed be it, where they shine !
Yes, for them whose souls have scope
Ample for a wingèd hope,
And can earthward bend an ear
For needful listening, pledge is here,
That, if thy new-born Charge shall tread
In thy footsteps, and be led
By that other Guide, whose light
Of manly virtues, mildly bright,
Gave him first the wished-for part
In thy gentle virgin heart ;
Then, amid the storms of life
Presigned by that dread strife
Whence ye have escaped together,
She may look for serene weather ;
In all trials sure to find
Comfort for a faithful mind ;
Kindlier issues, holier rest,
Than even now await her prest,
Conscious Nursling, to thy breast !

XXXIII.

THE WARNING.

A SEQUEL TO THE FOREGOING.

Just, the winds of March are blowing ;
Her ground-flowers shrink, afraid of showing
Their meek heads to the nipping air,
Which ye feel not, happy pair !
Sink into a kindly sleep.
We, meanwhile, our hope will keep ;
And if Time leagued with adverse Change

(Too busy fear !) shall cross its range,
Whatsoever check they bring,
Anxious duty hindering,
To like hope our prayers will cling.

Thus, while the ruminating spirit feeds
Upon the events of home as life proceeds,
Affections pure and holy in their source
Gain a fresh impulse, run a livelier course ;
Hopes that within the Father's heart prevail,
Are in the experienced Grandsire's slow to fail ;
And if the harp pleased his gay youth, it rings
To his grave touch with no unready strings,
While thoughts press on, and feelings overflow,
And quick words round him fall like flakes of snow.

Thanks to the Powers that yet maintain their
sway,
And have renewed the tributary Lay.
Truths of the heart flock in with eager pace,
And FANCY greets them with a fond embrace ;
Swift as the rising sun his beams extends
She shoots the tidings forth to distant friends ;
Their gifts she hails (deemed precious, as they prove
For the unconscious Babe so prompt a love!)—
But from this peaceful centre of delight
Vague sympathies have urged her to take flight :
Rapt into upper regions, like the bee
That sucks from mountain heath her honey fee ;
Or, like the warbling lark intent to shroud
His head in sunbeams or a bowery cloud,
She soars—and here and there her pinions rest
On proud towers, like this humble cottage, blest
With a new visitant, an infant guest—
Towers where red streamers flout the breezy sky
In pomp foreseen by her creative eye,
When feasts shall crowd the hall, and steeple bells
Glad proclamation make, and heights and dells
Catch the blithe music as it sinks and swells,
And harboured ships, whose pride is on the sea,
Shall hoist their topmast flags in sign of glee,
Honouring the hope of noble ancestry.

But who (though neither reckoning ills assigned
By Nature, nor reviewing in the mind
The track that was, and is, and must be, worn
With weary feet by all of woman born)—
Shall now by such a gift with joy be moved,
Nor feel the fulness of that joy reproved ?
Not He, whose last faint memory will command
The truth that Britain was his native land ;
Whose infant soul was tutored to confide
In the cleansed faith for which her martyrs died ;
Whose boyish ear the voice of her renown

With rapture thrilled ; whose Youth revered the
crown

Of Saxon liberty that Alfred wore,
Alfred, dear Babe, thy great Progenitor !
—Not He, who from her mellowed practice drew
His social sense of just, and fair, and true ;
And saw, thereafter, on the soil of France
Rash Polity begin her maniac dance,
Foundations broken up, the deeps run wild,
Nor grieved to see (himself not unbeguiled)—
Woke from the dream, the dreamer to upbraid,
And learn how sanguine expectations fade
When novel trusts by folly are betrayed,—
To see Presumption, turning pale, refrain
From further havoc, but repent in vain,—
Good aims lie down, and perish in the road
Where guilt had urged them on with ceaseless goad,
Proofs thickening round her that on public ends
Domestic virtue vitally depends,
That civic strife can turn the happiest hearth
Into a grievous sore of self-tormenting earth.

Can such a One, dear Babe ! though glad and
proud

To welcome thee, repel the fears that crowd
Into his English breast, and spare to quake
Less for his own than for thy innocent sake ?
Too late—or, should the providence of God
Lead, through dark ways by sin and sorrow trod,
Justice and peace to a secure abode,
Too soon—thou com'st into this breathing world ;
Ensigns of mimic outrage are unfurled.
Who shall preserve or prop the tottering Realm ?
What hand suffice to govern the state-helm ?
If, in the aims of men, the surest test
Of good or bad (whate'er be sought for or profest)
Lie in the means required, or ways ordained,
For compassing the end, else never gained ;
Yet governors and govern'd both are blind
To this plain truth, or fling it to the wind ;
If to expedience principle must bow ;
Past, future, shrinking up beneath the incumbent
Now ;

If cowardly concession still must feed
The thirst for power in men who ne'er concede ;
Nor turn aside, unless to shape a way
For domination at some riper day ;
If generous Loyalty must stand in awe
Of subtle Treason, in his mask of law,
Or with bravado insolent and hard,
Provoking punishment, to win reward ;
If office help the factious to conspire,
And they who *should* extinguish, fan the fire—
Then, will the sceptre be a straw, the crown

Sit loosely, like the thistle's crest of down ;
To be blown off at will, by Power that spares it
In cunning patience, from the head that wears it.

Lost people, trained to theoretic feud !
Lost above all, ye labouring multitude !
Bewildered whether ye, by slanderous tongues
Deceived, mistake calamities for wrongs ;
And over fancied usurpations brood,
Oft snapping at revenge in sullen mood ;
Or, from long stress of real injuries fly
To desperation for a remedy ;
In bursts of outrage spread your judgments wide,
And to your wrath cry out, " Be thou our guide ;"
Or, bound by oaths, come forth to tread earth's
floor

In marshalled thousands, darkening street and moor ;
With the worst shape mock-patience ever wore ;
Or, to the giddy top of self-esteem
By Flatterers carried, mount into a dream
Of boundless suffrage, at whose sage behest
Justice shall rule, disorder be suppress,
And every man sit down as Plenty's Guest !
—O for a bridle bitted with remorse
To stop your Leaders in their headstrong course !
Oh may the Almighty scatter with his grace
These mists, and lead you to a safer place,
By paths no human wisdom can foretrace !
May He pour round you, from worlds far above
Man's feverish passions, his pure light of love,
That quietly restores the natural mien
To hope, and makes truth willing to be seen !
Else shall your blood-stained hands in frenzy reap
Fields gaily sown when promises were cheap.—
Why is the Past belied with wicked art,
The Future made to play so false a part,
Among a people famed for strength of mind,
Foremost in freedom, noblest of mankind ?
We act as if we joyed in the sad tune
Storms make in rising, valued in the moon
Nought but her changes. Thus, ungrateful Nation !
If thou persist, and, scorning moderation,
Spread for thyself the snares of tribulation,
Whom, then, shall meekness guard ? What saving
skill

Lie in forbearance, strength in standing still ?
—Soon shall the widow (for the speed of Time
Nought equals when the hours are winged with
crime)

Widow, or wife, implore on tremulous knee,
From him who judged her lord, a like decree ;
The skies will weep o'er old men desolate :
Ye little-ones ! Earth shudders at your fate,
Outcasts and homeless orphans——

But turn, my Soul, and from the sleeping pair
 Earn thou the beauty of omniscient care !
 Be strong in faith, bid anxious thoughts lie still ;
 Seek for the good and cherish it—the ill
 Oppose, or bear with a submissive will.

1833.

XXXIV.

If this great world of joy and pain
 Revolve in one sure track ;
 If freedom, set, will rise again,
 And virtue, flown, come back ;
 Woe to the purblind crew who fill
 The heart with each day's care ;
 Nor gain, from past or future, skill
 To bear, and to forbear !

1833.

XXXV.

THE LABOURER'S NOON-DAY HYMN.

Up to the throne of God is borne
 The voice of praise at early morn,
 And he accepts the punctual hymn
 Sung as the light of day grows dim.

Nor will he turn his ear aside
 From holy offerings at noontide.
 Then here reposing let us raise
 A song of gratitude and praise.

What though our burthen be not light
 We need not toil from morn to night ;
 The respite of the mid-day hour
 Is in the thankful Creature's power.

Blest are the moments, doubly blest,
 That, drawn from this one hour of rest,
 Are with a ready heart bestowed
 Upon the service of our God !

Each field is then a hallowed spot,
 An altar is in each man's cot,
 A church in every grove that spreads
 Its living roof above our heads.

Look up to Heaven ! the industrious Sun
 Already half his race hath run ;
 He cannot halt nor go astray,
 But our immortal Spirits may.

Lord ! since his rising in the East,
 If we have faltered or transgressed,
 Guide, from thy love's abundant source,
 What yet remains of this day's course :

Help with thy grace, through life's short day,
 Our upward and our downward way ;
 And glorify for us the west,
 When we shall sink to final rest.

1834.

XXXVI.

ODE,

COMPOSED ON MAY MORNING.

WHILE from the purpling east departs
 The star that led the dawn,
 Blithe Flora from her couch upstarts,
 For May is on the lawn.
 A quickening hope, a freshening glee,
 Foreran the expected Power,
 Whose first-drawn breath, from bush and tree,
 Shakes off that pearly shower.

All Nature welcomes Her whose sway
 Tempers the year's extremes ;
 Who scattereth lustres o'er noon-day,
 Like morning's dewy gleams ;
 While mellow warble, sprightly trill,
 The tremulous heart excite ;
 And hums the balmy air to still
 The balance of delight.

Time was, blest Power ! when youths and maids
 At peep of dawn would rise,
 And wander forth, in forest glades
 Thy birth to solemnize.
 Though mute the song—to grace the rite
 Untouched the hawthorn bough,
 Thy Spirit triumphs o'er the slight ;
 Man changes, but not Thou !

Thy feathered Lieges bill and wings
 In love's disport employ ;
 Warmed by thy influence, creeping things
 Awake to silent joy :

Queen art thou still for each gay plant
 Where the slim wild deer roves ;
 And served in depths where fishes haunt
 Their own mysterious groves.

Cloud-piercing peak, and trackless heath,
 Instinctive homage pay ;
 Nor wants the dim-lit cave a wreath
 To honour thee, sweet May !

Where cities fanned by thy brisk airs
Behold a smokeless sky,
Their puniest flower-pot-nursling dares
To open a bright eye.

And if, on this thy natal morn,
The pole, from which thy name
Hath not departed, stands forlorn
Of song and dance and game ;
Still from the village-green a vow
Aspires to thee address,
Wherever peace is on the brow,
Or love within the breast.

Yes ! where Love nestles thou canst teach
The soul to love the more ;
Hearts also shall thy lessons reach
That never loved before.
Stript is the haughty one of pride,
The bashful freed from fear,
While rising, like the ocean-tide,
In flows the joyous year.

Hush, feeble lyre ! weak words refuse
The service to prolong !
To yon exulting thrush the Muse
Entrusts the imperfect song ;
His voice shall chant, in accents clear,
Throughout the live-long day,
Till the first silver star appear,
The sovereignty of May.

1826.

XXXVII

TO MAY.

THOUGH many suns have risen and set
Since thou, blithe May, wert born,
And Bards, who hailed thee, may forget
Thy gifts, thy beauty scorn ;
There are who to a birthday strain
Confine not harp and voice,
But evermore throughout thy reign
Are grateful and rejoice !

Delicious odours ! music sweet,
Too sweet to pass away !
Oh for a deathless song to meet
The soul's desire—a lay
That, when a thousand years are told,
Should praise thee, genial Power !
Through summer heat, autumnal cold,
And winter's dreariest hour.

Earth, sea, thy presence feel—nor less,
If yon ethereal blue
With its soft smile the truth express,
The heavens have felt it too.
The inmost heart of man if glad
Partakes a livelier cheer ;
And eyes that cannot but be sad
Let fall a brightened tear.

Since thy return, through days and weeks
Of hope that grew by stealth,
How many wan and faded cheeks
Have kindled into health !
The Old, by thee revived, have said,
“ Another year is ours ;”
And wayworn Wanderers, poorly fed,
Have smiled upon thy flowers.

Who tripping lisps a merry song
Amid his playful peers ?
The tender Infant who was long
A prisoner of fond fears ;
But now, when every sharp-edged blast
Is quiet in its sheath,
His Mother leaves him free to taste
Earth's sweetness in thy breath.

Thy help is with the weed that creeps
Along the humblest ground ;
No cliff so bare but on its steep
Thy favours may be found ;
But most on some peculiar nook
That our own hands have drest,
Thou and thy train are proud to look,
And seem to love it best.

And yet how pleased we wander forth
When May is whispering, “ Come !
“ Choose from the bowers of virgin earth
“ The happiest for your home ;
“ Heaven's bounteous love through me is spread
“ From sunshine, clouds, winds, waves,
“ Drops on the mouldering turret's head,
“ And on your turf-clad graves !”

Such greeting heard, away with sighs
For lilies that must fade,
Or ‘ the rathe primrose as it dies
Forsaken’ in the shade !
Vernal fruitions and desires
Are linked in endless chase ;
While, as one kindly growth retires,
Another takes its place.

And what if thou, sweet May, hast known
 Mishap by worm and blight ;
 If expectations newly blown
 Have perished in thy sight ;
 If loves and joys, while up they sprung,
 Were caught as in a snare ;
 Such is the lot of all the young,
 However bright and fair.

Lo ! Streams that April could not check
 Are patient of thy rule ;
 Gurgling in foamy water-break,
 Loitering in glassy pool :
 By thee, thee only, could be sent
 Such gentle mists as glide,
 Curling with unconfirmed intent,
 On that green mountain's side.

How delicate the leafy veil
 Through which yon house of God
 Gleams 'mid the peace of this deep dale
 By few but shepherds trod !
 And lowly huts, near beaten ways,
 No sooner stand attired
 In thy fresh wreaths, than they for praise
 Peep forth, and are admired.

Season of fancy and of hope,
 Permit not for one hour,
 A blossom from thy crown to drop,
 Nor add to it a flower !
 Keep, lovely May, as if by touch
 Of self-restraining art,
 This modest charm of not too much,
 Part seen, imagined part !

1826—1834

XXXVIII.

LINES

SUGGESTED BY A PORTRAIT FROM THE PENCIL OF
 F. STONE.

GUILED into forgetfulness of care
 To the day's unfinished task ; of pen
 book regardless, and of that fair scene
 Nature's prodigality displayed
 fore my window, oftentimes and long
 gaze upon a Portrait whose mild gleam
 beauty never ceases to enrich
 the common light ; whose stillness charms the air,
 seems to charm it, into like repose ;
 whose silence, for the pleasure of the ear,
 surpasses sweetest music. There she sits

With emblematic purity attired
 In a white vest, white as her marble neck
 Is, and the pillar of the throat would be
 But for the shadow by the drooping chin
 Cast into that recess—the tender shade,
 The shade and light, both there and every where,
 And through the very atmosphere she breathes,
 Broad, clear, and toned harmoniously, with skill
 That might from nature have been learnt in the
 hour

When the lone shepherd sees the morning spread
 Upon the mountains. Look at her, who'er
 Thou be that, kindling with a poet's soul,
 Hast loved the painter's true Promethean craft
 Intensely—from Imagination take
 The treasure,—what mine eyes behold see thou,
 Even though the Atlantic ocean roll between.

A silver line, that runs from brow to crown
 And in the middle parts the braided hair,
 Just serves to show how delicate a soil
 The golden harvest grows in ; and those eyes,
 Soft and capacious as a cloudless sky
 Whose azure depth their colour emulates,
 Must needs be conversant with upward looks,
 Prayer's voiceless service ; but now, seeking nought
 And shunning nought, their own peculiar life
 Of motion they renounce, and with the head
 Partake its inclination towards earth
 In humble grace, and quiet pensiveness
 Caught at the point where it stops short of sadness.

Offspring of soul-bewitching Art, make me
 Thy confidant ! say, whence derived that air
 Of calm abstraction ? Can the ruling thought
 Be with some lover far away, or one
 Crossed by misfortune, or of doubted faith ?
 Inapt conjecture ! Childhood here, a moon
 Crescent in simple loveliness serene,
 Has but approached the gates of womanhood,
 Not entered them ; her heart is yet unpierced
 By the blind Archer-god ; her fancy free :
 The fount of feeling, if unsought elsewhere,
 Will not be found.

Her right hand, as it lies
 Across the slender wrist of the left arm
 Upon her lap reposing, holds—but mark
 How slackly, for the absent mind permits
 No firmer grasp—a little wild-flower, joined
 As in a posy, with a few pale ears
 Of yellowing corn, the same that overtopped
 And in their common birthplace sheltered it
 'Till they were plucked together ; a blue flower
 Called by the thrifty husbandman a weed ;

But Ceres, in her garland, might have worn
That ornament, unblamed. The floweret, held
In scarcely conscious fingers, was, she knows,
(Her Father told her so) in youth's gay dawn
Her Mother's favourite; and the orphan Girl,
In her own dawn—a dawn less gay and bright,
Loves it, while there in solitary peace
She sits, for that departed Mother's sake.
—Not from a source less sacred is derived
(Surely I do not err) that pensive air
Of calm abstraction through the face diffused
And the whole person.

Words have something told
More than the pencil can, and verily
More than is needed, but the precious Art
Forgives their interference—Art divine,
That both creates and fixes, in despite
Of Death and Time, the marvels it hath wrought.

Strange contrasts have we in this world of ours!
That posture, and the look of filial love
Thinking of past and gone, with what is left
Dearly united, might be swept away
From this fair Portrait's fleshly Archetype,
Even by an innocent fancy's slightest freak
Banished, nor ever, haply, be restored
To their lost place, or meet in harmony
So exquisite; but *here* do they abide,
Enshrined for ages. Is not then the Art
Godlike, a humble branch of the divine,
In visible quest of immortality,
Stretched forth with trembling hope?—In every
realm,

From high Gibraltar to Siberian plains,
Thousands, in each variety of tongue
That Europe knows, would echo this appeal;
One above all, a Monk who waits on God
In the magnific Convent built of yore
To sanctify the Escorial palace. He—
Guiding, from cell to cell and room to room,
A British Painter (eminent for truth
In character, and depth of feeling, shown
By labours that have touched the hearts of kings,
And are endeared to simple cottagers)—
Came, in that service, to a glorious work,
Our Lord's Last Supper, beautiful as when first
The appropriate Picture, fresh from Titian's hand,
Graced the Refectory: and there, while both
Stood with eyes fixed upon that masterpiece,
The hoary Father in the Stranger's ear
Breathed out these words:—"Here daily do we sit,
Thanks given to God for daily bread, and here
Pondering the mischiefs of these restless times,
And thinking of my Brethren, dead, dispersed,

Or changed and changing, I not seldom gaze
Upon this solemn Company unmoved
By shock of circumstance, or lapse of years,
Until I cannot but believe that they—
They are in truth the Substance, we the Shadows.

So spake the mild Jeronymite, his griefs
Melting away within him like a dream
Ere he had ceased to gaze, perhaps to speak:
And I, grown old, but in a happier land,
Domestic Portrait! have to verse consigned
In thy calm presence those heart-moving words:
Words that can soothe, more than they agitate;
Whose spirit, like the angel that went down
Into Bethesda's pool, with healing virtue
Informs the fountain in the human breast
Which by 'the visitation was disturbed.
—But why this stealing tear? Companion met,
On thee I look, not sorrowing; fare thee well,
My Song's Inspirer, once again farewell!*

1831.

XXXIX.

THE FOREGOING SUBJECT RESUMED.

AMONG a grave fraternity of Monks,
For One, but surely not for One alone,
Triumphs, in that great work, the Painter's skill,
Humbling the body, to exalt the soul;
Yet representing, amid wreck and wrong
And dissolution and decay, the warm
And breathing life of flesh, as if already
Clothed with impassive majesty, and graced
With no mean earnest of a heritage
Assigned to it in future worlds. Thou, too,
With thy memorial flower, meek Portraiture!
From whose serene companionship I passed
Pursued by thoughts that haunt me still; thou
also—

Though but a simple object, into light
Called forth by those affections that endear
The private hearth; though keeping thy sole seat
In singleness, and little tried by time,
Creation, as it were, of yesterday—
With a congenial function art endued
For each and all of us, together joined
In course of nature under a low roof

* The pile of buildings, composing the palace and convent of San Lorenzo, has, in common usage, lost its proper name in that of the *Escorial*, a village at the foot of the hill upon which the splendid edifice, built by Philip the Second, stands. It need scarcely be added, that Wilkie is the painter alluded to.

thy charities and duties that proceed
 out of the bosom of a wiser vow.
 O a like salutary sense of awe
 Or sacred wonder, growing with the power
 Of meditation that attempts to weigh,
 On faithful scales, things and their opposites,
 And thy enduring quiet gently raise
 The household small and sensitive,—whose love,
 Dependent as in part its blessings are
 Upon frail ties dissolving or dissolved
 On earth, will be revived, we trust, in heaven.*

1834.

XL.

O fair, so sweet, withal so sensitive,
 Would that the little Flowers were born to live,
 Conscious of half the pleasure which they give ;

That to this mountain-daisy's self were known
 The beauty of its star-shaped shadow, thrown
 On the smooth surface of this naked stone !

And what if hence a bold desire should mount
 As high as the Sun, that he could take account
 Of all that issues from his glorious fount !

And might he ken how by his sovereign aid
 These delicate companionships are made ;
 And how he rules the pomp of light and shade ;

And were the Sister-power that shines by night
 Privileged, what a countenance of delight
 Could through the clouds break forth on human
 Sight !

And fancies ! wheresoe'er shall turn thine eye
 On earth, air, ocean, or the starry sky,
 converse with Nature in pure sympathy ;

All vain desires, all lawless wishes quelled,
 O Thou to love and praise alike impelled,
 Whatever boon is granted or withheld.

* In the class entitled "Musings," in Mr. Southey's
 minor Poems, is one upon his own miniature Picture,
 seen in childhood, and another upon a landscape painted
 by Gaspar Poussin. It is possible that every word of the
 above verses, though similar in subject, might have been
 written had the author been unacquainted with those
 beautiful effusions of poetic sentiment. But, for his own
 satisfaction, he must be allowed thus publicly to acknow-
 ledge the pleasure those two Poems of his Friend have
 given him, and the grateful influence they have upon his
 mind as often as he reads them, or thinks of them.

XLI.

UPON SEEING A COLOURED DRAWING OF THE BIRD
 OF PARADISE IN AN ALBUM.

Who rashly strove thy Image to portray !
 Thou buoyant minion of the tropic air ;
 How could he think of the live creature—gay
 With a divinity of colours, drest
 In all her brightness, from the dancing crest
 Far as the last gleam of the filmy train
 Extended and extending to sustain
 The motions that it graces—and forbear
 To drop his pencil ! Flowers of every clime
 Depicted on these pages smile at time ;
 And gorgeous insects copied with nice care
 Are here, and likenesses of many a shell
 Tossed ashore by restless waves,
 Or in the diver's grasp fetched up from caves
 Where sea-nymphs might be proud to dwell :
 But whose rash hand (again I ask) could dare,
 'Mid casual tokens and promiscuous shows,
 To circumscribe this Shape in fixed repose ;
 Could imitate for indolent survey,
 Perhaps for touch profane,
 Plumes that might catch, but cannot keep, a stain ;
 And, with cloud-streaks lightest and loftiest, share
 The sun's first greeting, his last farewell ray !

Resplendent Wanderer ! followed with glad eyes
 Where'er her course ; mysterious Bird !
 To whom, by wondering Fancy stirred,
 Eastern Islanders have given
 A holy name—the Bird of Heaven !
 And even a title higher still,
 The Bird of God ! whose blessed will
 She seems performing as she flies
 Over the earth and through the skies
 In never-weary search of Paradise—
 Region that crowns her beauty with the name
 She bears for us—for us how blest,
 How happy at all seasons, could like aim
 Uphold our Spirits urged to kindred flight
 On wings that fear no glance of God's pure sight,
 No tempest from his breath, their promised rest
 Seeking with indefatigable quest
 Above a world that deems itself most wise
 When most enslaved by gross realities !

1835.

SONNETS DEDICATED TO LIBERTY AND ORDER.

I.

COMPOSED AFTER READING A NEWSPAPER OF THE DAY.

"PEOPLE! your chains are severing link by link;
Soon shall the Rich be levelled down—the Poor
Meet them half way." Vain boast! for These, the
more

They thus would rise, must low and lower sink
Till, by repentance stung, they fear to think;
While all lie prostrate, save the tyrant few
Bent in quick turns each other to undo,
And mix the poison, they themselves must drink.
Mistrust thyself, vain Country! cease to cry,
"Knowledge will save me from the threatened woe."
For, if than other rash ones more thou know,
Yet on presumptuous wing as far would fly
Above thy knowledge as they dared to go,
Thou wilt provoke a heavier penalty.

II.

UPON THE LATE GENERAL FAST.

March, 1832.

RELUCTANT call it was; the rite delayed;
And in the Senate some there were who doffed
The last of their humanity, and scoffed
At providential judgments, undismayed
By their own daring. But the People prayed
As with one voice; their flinty heart grew soft
With penitential sorrow, and aloft
Their spirit mounted, crying, "God us aid!"
Oh that with aspirations more intense,
Chastised by self-abasement more profound,
This People, once so happy, so renowned
For liberty, would seek from God defence
Against far heavier ill, the pestilence
Of revolution, impiously unbound!

III.

SAID Secrecy to Cowardice and Fraud,
Falsehood and Treachery, in close council met,
Deep under ground, in Pluto's cabinet,
"The frost of England's pride will soon be thawed;
"Hooded the open brow that overawed
"Our schemes; the faith and honour, never yet

"By us with hope encountered, be upset;—
"For once I burst my bands, and cry, applaud!"
Then whispered she, "The Bill is carrying out!"
They heard, and, starting up, the Brood of Night
Clapped hands, and shook with glee their matted
locks;

All Powers and Places that abhor the light
Joined in the transport, echoed back their shout,
Hurrah for ———, hugging his Ballot-box!

IV.

BLEST Statesman He, whose Mind's unselfish will
Leaves him at ease among grand thoughts: whose
Sees that, apart from magnanimity, [ey
Wisdom exists not; nor the humbler skill
Of Prudence, disentangling good and ill
With patient care. What tho' assaults run high,
They daunt not him who holds his ministry,
Resolute, at all hazards, to fulfil
Its duties;—prompt to move, but firm to wait,—
Knowing, things rashly sought are rarely found;
That, for the functions of an ancient State—
Strong by her charters, free because imbued,
Servant of Providence, not slave of Fate—
Perilous is sweeping change, all chance unsound.

V.

IN ALLUSION TO VARIOUS RECENT HISTORIES AND
NOTICES OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

PORTENTOUS change when History can appear
As the cool Advocate of foul device;
Reckless audacity extol, and jeer
At consciences perplexed with scruples nice!
They who bewail not, must abhor, the sneer
Born of Conceit, Power's blind Idolater;
Or haply sprung from vaunting Cowardice
Betrayed by mockery of holy fear.
Hath it not long been said the wrath of Man
Works not the righteousness of God? Oh bend,
Bend, ye Perverse! to judgments from on High,
Laws that lay under Heaven's perpetual ban
All principles of action that transcend
The sacred limits of humanity.

VI.

CONTINUED.

WHO ponders National events shall find
 An awful balancing of loss and gain,
 Joy based on sorrow, good with ill combined,
 And proud deliverance issuing out of pain
 And direful throes ; as if the All-ruling Mind,
 With whose perfection it consists to ordain
 Volcanic burst, earthquake, and hurricane,
 Dealt in like sort with feeble human kind
 By laws immutable. But woe for him
 Who thus deceived shall lend an eager hand
 To social havoc. Is not Conscience ours,
 And Truth, whose eye guilt only can make dim ;
 And Will, whose office, by divine command,
 Is to control and check disordered Powers ?

VII.

CONCLUDED.

LONG-FAVOUR'D England ! be not thou misled
 By monstrous theories of alien growth,
 Thy alien frenzy seize thee, waxing wroth,
 Self-smitten till thy garments reek dyed red
 With thy own blood, which tears in torrents shed
 All to wash out, tears flowing ere thy troth
 Be plighted, not to ease but sullen sloth,
 Nor wan despair—the ghost of false hope fled
 Into a shameful grave. Among thy youth,
 Thy Country ! if such warning be held dear,
 When shall a Veteran's heart be thrilled with joy,
 When who would gather from eternal truth,
 For time and season, rules that work to cheer—
 Not scourge, to save the People—not destroy.

VIII.

MAN of the Western World ! in Fate's dark book
 Hence these opprobrious leaves of dire portent ?
 Think ye your British Ancestors forsook
 Their native Land, for outrage provident ;
 From unsubmitive necks the bridle shook
 To give, in their Descendants, freer vent
 And wider range to passions turbulent,
 To mutual tyranny a deadlier loss ?
 Nay, said a voice, soft as the south wind's breath,
 Live through the stormy surface of the flood
 To the great current flowing underneath ;
 Explore the countless springs of silent good ;
 Shall the truth be better understood,
 And thy grieved Spirit brighten strong in faith.

IX.

TO THE PENNSYLVANIANS.

DAYS undefiled by luxury or sloth,
 Firm self-denial, manners grave and staid,
 Rights equal, laws with cheerfulness obeyed,
 Words that require no sanction from an oath,
 And simple honesty a common growth—
 This high repute, with bounteous Nature's aid,
 Won confidence, now ruthlessly betrayed
 At will, your power the measure of your troth !—
 All who revere the memory of Penn
 Grieve for the land on whose wild woods his name
 Was fondly grafted with a virtuous aim,
 Renounced, abandoned by degenerate Men
 For state-dishonour black as ever came
 To upper air from Mammon's loathsome den.

X.

AT BOLOGNA, IN REMEMBRANCE OF THE LATE
INSURRECTIONS, 1837.

I.

AH why deceive ourselves ! by no mere fit
 Of sudden passion roused shall men attain
 True freedom where for ages they have lain
 Bound in a dark abominable pit,
 With life's best sinews more and more unknit.
 Here, there, a banded few who loathe the chain
 May rise to break it : effort worse than vain
 For thee, O great Italian nation, split
 Into those jarring fractions.—Let thy scope
 Be one fixed mind for all ; thy rights approve
 To thy own conscience gradually renewed ;
 Learn to make Time the father of wise Hope ;
 Then trust thy cause to the arm of Fortitude,
 The light of Knowledge, and the warmth of Love.

XI.

CONTINUED.

II.

HARD task ! exclaim the undisciplined, to lean
 On Patience coupled with such slow endeavour,
 That long-lived servitude must last for ever.
 Perish the grovelling few, who, prest between
 Wrongs and the terror of redress, would wean
 Millions from glorious aims. Our chains to sever
 Let us break forth in tempest now or never !—
 What, is there then no space for golden mean
 And gradual progress ?—Twilight leads to day,
 And, even within the burning zones of earth,
 The hastiest sunrise yields a temperate ray ;
 The softest breeze to fairest flowers gives birth :
 Think not that Prudence dwells in dark abodes,
 She scans the future with the eye of gods.

XII.

CONCLUDED.

III.

As leaves are to the tree whereon they grow
 And wither, every human generation
 Is to the Being of a mighty nation,
 Locked in our world's embrace through weal and
 woe ;

Thought that should teach the zealot to forego
 Rash schemes, to abjure all selfish agitation,
 And seek through noiseless pains and moderation
 The unblemished good they only can bestow.

Alas ! with most, who weigh futurity
 Against time present, passion holds the scales :
 Hence equal ignorance of both prevails,
 And nations sink ; or, struggling to be free,
 Are doomed to flounder on, like wounded whales
 Tossed on the bosom of a stormy sea.

XIII.

YOUNG ENGLAND—what is then become of Old
 Of dear Old England ? Think they she is dead,
 Dead to the very name ? Presumption fed
 On empty air ! That name will keep its hold

In the true filial bosom's inmost fold
 For ever.—The Spirit of Alfred, at the head
 Of all who for her rights watch'd, toil'd and bled,
 Knows that this prophecy is not too bold.
 What—how ! shall she submit in will and deed
 To Beardless Boys—an imitative race,
 The *servum pecus* of a Gallic breed ?
 Dear Mother ! if thou *must* thy steps retrace,
 Go where at least meek Innocency dwells ;
 Let Babes and Sucklings be thy oracles.

XIV.

FEEL for the wrongs to universal ken
 Daily exposed, woe that unshrouded lies ;
 And seek the Sufferer in his darkest den,
 Whether conducted to the spot by sighs
 And moanings, or he dwells (as if the wren
 Taught him concealment) hidden from all eyes
 In silence and the awful modesties
 Of sorrow ;—feel for all, as brother Men !
 Rest not in hope want's icy chain to thaw
 By casual boons and formal charities ;
 Learn to be just, just through impartial law ;
 Far as ye may, erect and equalise ;
 And, what ye cannot reach by statute, draw
 Each from his fountain of self-sacrifice !

SONNETS UPON THE PUNISHMENT OF DEATH.

IN SERIES.

I.

SUGGESTED BY THE VIEW OF LANCASTER CASTLE
(ON THE ROAD FROM THE SOUTH).

HIS Spot—at once unfolding sight so fair
Of sea and land, with yon grey towers that still
Rise up as if to lord it over air—
Might soothe in human breasts the sense of ill,
Or charm it out of memory; yea, might fill
The heart with joy and gratitude to God
For all his bounties upon man bestowed:
Why bears it then the name of "Weeping Hill"?
Thousands, as toward yon old Lancastrian Towers,
Prison's crown, along this way they past
Or lingering durance or quick death with shame,
From this bare eminence thereon have cast
Their first look—blinded as tears fell in showers
Led on their chains; and hence that doleful name.

II.

TENDERLY do we feel by Nature's law
For worst offenders: though the heart will heave
With indignation, deeply moved we grieve,
After thought, for Him who stood in awe
Of either of God nor man, and only saw,
Poor wretch, a horrible device enthroned
On proud temptations, till the victim groaned
Under the steel his hand had dared to draw.
O, restrain compassion, if its course,
Is oft befals, prevent or turn aside
Judgments and aims and acts whose higher source
Is sympathy with the unforewarned, who died
Anameless—with them that shuddered o'er his grave,
And all who from the law firm safety crave.

III.

THE Roman Consul doomed his sons to die
Who had betrayed their country. The stern word
Forged (may it through all time afford)
A theme for praise and admiration high.
Upon the surface of humanity
He rested not; its depths his mind explored;

He felt; but his parental bosom's lord
Was Duty,—Duty calmed his agony.
And some, we know, when they by wilful act
A single human life have wrongly taken,
Pass sentence on themselves, confess the fact,
And, to atone for it, with soul unshaken
Kneel at the feet of Justice, and, for faith
Broken with all mankind, solicit death.

IV.

Is *Death*, when evil against good has fought
With such fell mastery that a man may dare
By deeds the blackest purpose to lay bare?
Is *Death*, for one to that condition brought,
For him, or any one, the thing that ought
To be *most* dreaded? Lawgivers, beware,
Lest, capital pains remitting till ye spare
The murderer, ye, by sanction to that thought
Seemingly given, debase the general mind;
Tempt the vague will tried standards to disown,
Nor only palpable restraints unbind,
But upon Honour's head disturb the crown,
Whose absolute rule permits not to withstand
In the weak love of life his least command.

V.

Nor to the object specially designed,
Howe'er momentous in itself it be,
Good to promote or curb depravity,
Is the wise Legislator's view confined.
His Spirit, when most severe, is oft most kind;
As all Authority in earth depends
On Love and Fear, their several powers he blends,
Copying with awe the one Paternal mind.
Uncaught by processes in show humane,
He feels how far the act would derogate
From even the humblest functions of the State;
If she, self-shorn of Majesty, ordain
That never more shall hang upon her breath
The last alternative of Life or Death.

VI.

YE brood of conscience—Spectres! that frequent
 The bad Man's restless walk, and haunt his bed—
 Fiends in your aspect, yet beneficent
 In act, as hovering Angels when they spread
 Their wings to guard the unconscious Innocent—
 Slow be the Statutes of the land to share
 A laxity that could not but impair
Your power to punish crime, and so prevent.
 And ye, Beliefs! coiled serpent-like about
 The adage on all tongues, "Murder will out,"
 How shall your ancient warnings work for good
 In the full might they hitherto have shown,
 If for deliberate shedder of man's blood
 Survive not Judgment that requires his own?

VII.

BEFORE the world had past her time of youth
 While polity and discipline were weak,
 The precept eye for eye, and tooth for tooth,
 Came forth—a light, though but as of day-break,
 Strong as could then be borne. A Master meek
 Proscribed the spirit fostered by that rule,
 Patience *his* law, long-suffering *his* school,
 And love the end, which all through peace must
 seek.

But lamentably do they err who strain
 His mandates, given rash impulse to controul
 And keep vindictive thirstings from the soul,
 So far that, if consistent in their scheme,
 They must forbid the State to inflict a pain,
 Making of social order a mere dream.

VIII.

FIT retribution, by the moral code
 Determined, lies beyond the State's embrace,
 Yet, as she may, for each peculiar case
 She plants well-measured terrors in the road
 Of wrongful acts. Downward it is and broad,
 And, the main fear once doomed to banishment,
 Far oftener then, bad ushering worse event,
 Blood would be spilt that in his dark abode
 Crime might lie better hid. And, should the
 change

Take from the horror due to a foul deed,
 Pursuit and evidence so far must fail,
 And, guilt escaping, passion then might plead
 In angry spirits for her old free range,
 And the "wild justice of revenge" prevail.

IX.

THOUGH to give timely warning and deter
 Is one great aim of penalty, extend
 Thy mental vision further and ascend
 Far higher, else full surely shalt thou err.
 What is a State? The wise behold in her
 A creature born of time, that keeps one eye
 Fixed on the statutes of Eternity,
 To which her judgments reverently defer.
 Speaking through Law's dispassionate voice the
 State

Endues her conscience with external life
 And being, to preclude or quell the strife
 Of individual will, to elevate
 The grovelling mind, the erring to recal,
 And fortify the moral sense of all.

X.

OUR bodily life, some plead, that life the shrine
 Of an immortal spirit, is a gift
 So sacred, so informed with light divine,
 That no tribunal, though most wise to sift
 Deed and intent, should turn the Being adrift
 Into that world where penitential tear
 May not avail, nor prayer have for God's ear
 A voice—that world whose veil no hand can lift
 For earthly sight. "Eternity and Time"
They urge, "have interwoven claims and rights
 Not to be jeopardised through foulest crime:
 The sentence rule by mercy's heaven-born lights
 Even so; but measuring not by finite sense
 Infinite Power, perfect Intelligence.

XI.

AM, think how one compelled for life to abide
 Locked in a dungeon needs must eat the heart
 Out of his own humanity, and part
 With every hope that mutual cares provide;
 And, should a less unnatural doom confide
 In life-long exile on a savage coast,
 Soon the relapsing penitent may boast
 Of yet more heinous guilt, with fiercer pride.
 Hence thoughtful Mercy, Mercy sage and pure,
 Sanctions the forfeiture that Law demands,
 Leaving the final issue in *His* hands
 Whose goodness knows no change, whose love
 sure,
 Who sees, foresees; who cannot judge amiss,
 And wafts at will the contrite soul to bliss.

XII.

SEE the Condemned alone within his cell
 and prostrate at some moment when remorse
 flings to the quick, and, with resistless force,
 assaults the pride she strove in vain to quell.
 Then mark him, him who could so long rebel,
 the crime confessed, a kneeling Penitent
 before the Altar, where the Sacrament
 softens his heart, till from his eyes outwell
 tears of salvation. Welcome death ! while Heaven
 does in this change exceedingly rejoice ;
 While yet the solemn heed the State hath given
 helps him to meet the last Tribunal's voice
 faith, which fresh offences, were he cast
 in old temptations, might for ever blast.

XIII.

CONCLUSION.

YES, though He well may tremble at the sound
 of his own voice, who from the judgment-seat
 sends the pale Convict to his last retreat
 death ; though Listeners shudder all around,
 they know the dread requital's source profound ;
 or is, they feel, its wisdom obsolete—
 Would that it were !) the sacrifice unmeet

For Christian Faith. But hopeful signs abound ;
 The social rights of man breathe purer air ;
 Religion deepens her preventive care ;
 Then, moved by needless fear of past abuse,
 Strike not from Law's firm hand that awful rod,
 But leave it thence to drop for lack of use :
 Oh, speed the blessed hour, Almighty God !

XIV.

APOLOGY.

THE formal World relaxes her cold chain
 For One who speaks in numbers ; ampler scope
 His utterance finds ; and, conscious of the gain,
 Imagination works with bolder hope
 The cause of grateful reason to sustain ;
 And, serving Truth, the heart more strongly beats
 Against all barriers which his labour meets
 In lofty place, or humble Life's domain.
 Enough ;—before us lay a painful road,
 And guidance have I sought in duteous love
 From Wisdom's heavenly Father. Hence hath
 flowed
 Patience, with trust that, whatsoe'er the way
 Each takes in this high matter, all may move
 Cheered with the prospect of a brighter day.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

I.

EPISTLE

TO SIR GEORGE HOWLAND BEAUMONT, BART.

FROM THE SOUTH-WEST COAST OF CUMBERLAND.—1811.

FAR from our home by Grasmere's quiet Lake,
 From the Vale's peace which all her fields partake,
 Here on the bleakest point of Cumbria's shore
 We sojourn stunned by Ocean's ceaseless roar;
 While, day by day, grim neighbour! huge Black
 Comb

Frowns deepening visibly his native gloom,
 Unless, perchance rejecting in despite
 What on the Plain *we* have of warmth and light,
 In his own storms he hides himself from sight.
 Rough is the time; and thoughts, that would be free
 From heaviness, oft fly, dear Friend, to thee;
 Turn from a spot where neither sheltered road
 Nor hedge-row screen invites my steps abroad;
 Where one poor Plane-tree, having as it might
 Attained a stature twice a tall man's height,
 Hopeless of further growth, and brown and sere
 Through half the summer, stands with top cut sheer,
 Like an unshifting weathercock which proves
 How cold the quarter that the wind best loves,
 Or like a Centinel that, evermore
 Darkening the window, ill defends the door
 Of this unfinished house—a Fortress bare,
 Where strength has been the Builder's only care;
 Whose rugged walls may still for years demand
 The final polish of the Plasterer's hand.

—This Dwelling's Inmate more than three weeks'
 space

And oft a Prisoner in the cheerless place,
 I—of whose touch the fiddle would complain,
 Whose breath would labour at the flute in vain,
 In music all unversed, nor blessed with skill
 A bridge to copy, or to paint a mill,
 Tired of my books, a scanty company!
 And tired of listening to the boisterous sea—
 Pace between door and window muttering rhyme,
 An old resource to cheat a froward time!
 Though these dull hours (mine is it, or their shame?)
 Would tempt me to renounce that humble aim.
 —But if there be a Muse who, free to take
 Her seat upon Olympus, doth forsake

Those heights (like Phœbus when his golden lock
 He veiled, attendant on Thessalian flocks)
 And, in disguise, a Milkmaid with her pail
 Trips down the pathways of some winding dale;
 Or, like a Mermaid, warbles on the shores
 To fishers mending nets beside their doors;
 Or, Pilgrim-like, on forest moss reclined,
 Gives plaintive ditties to the heedless wind,
 Or listens to its play among the boughs
 Above her head and so forgets her vows—
 If such a Visitant of Earth there be
 And she would deign this day to smile on me
 And aid my verse, content with local bounds
 Of natural beauty and life's daily rounds,
 Thoughts, chances, sights, or doings, which we tell
 Without reserve to those whom we love well—
 Then haply, Beaumont! words in current clear
 Will flow, and on a welcome page appear
 Duly before thy sight, unless they perish here.

What shall I treat of? News from Mona's Isle
 Such have we, but unvaried in its style;
 No tales of Runagates fresh landed, whence
 And wherefore fugitive or on what pretence;
 Of feasts, or scandal, eddying like the wind
 Most restlessly alive when most confined.
 Ask not of me, whose tongue can best appease
 The mighty tumults of the HOUSE OF KEYS;
 The last year's cup whose Ram or Heifer gained,
 What slopes are planted, or what mosses drained
 An eye of fancy only can I cast
 On that proud pageant now at hand or past,
 When full five hundred boats in trim array,
 With nets and sails outspread and streamers gay,
 And chanted hymns and stiller voice of prayer,
 For the old Manx-harvest to the Deep repair,
 Soon as the herring-shoals at distance shine
 Like beds of moonlight shifting on the brine.

Mona from our Abode is daily seen,
 But with a wilderness of waves between;
 And by conjecture only can we speak
 Of aught transacted there in bay or creek;
 No tidings reach us thence from town or field,
 Only faint news her mountain sunbeams yield,
 And some we gather from the misty air,

And some the hovering clouds, our telegraph,
declare.

But these poetic mysteries I withhold ;
For Fancy hath her fits both hot and cold,
and should the colder fit with You be on
When You might read, my credit would be gone.

Let more substantial themes the pen engage,
and nearer interests culled from the opening stage
of our migration.—Ere the welcome dawn
had from the east her silver star withdrawn,
The Wain stood ready, at our Cottage-door,
thoughtfully freighted with a various store ;
and long or ere the uprising of the Sun
her dew-damped dust our journey was begun,
needful journey, under favouring skies,
through peopled Vales ; yet something in the guise
of those old Patriarchs when from well to well
they roamed through Wastes where now the tented
Arabs dwell.

Say first, to whom did we the charge confide,
who promptly undertook the Wain to guide
by many a sharply-twining road and down,
and over many a wide hill's craggy crown,
through the quick turns of many a hollow nook,
and the rough bed of many an unbridged brook ?
The blooming Lass—who in her better hand
bore a light switch, her sceptre of command
when, yet a slender Girl, she often led,
skilful and bold, the horse and burthened sled *
from the peat-yielding Moss on Gowdar's head.
What could go wrong with such a Charioteer
or goods and chattels, or those Infants dear,
a Pair who smilingly sate side by side,
our hope confirming that the salt-sea tide,
those free embraces we were bound to seek,
would their lost strength restore and freshen the
pale cheek ?
Such hope did either Parent entertain
acing behind along the silent lane.

Blithe hopes and happy musings soon took flight,
or lo ! an uncouth melancholy sight—
on a green bank a creature stood forlorn
just half protruded to the light of morn,
his hinder part concealed by hedge-row thorn.
The Figure called to mind a beast of prey
deprived of its frightful powers by slow decay,
and, though no longer upon rapine bent,
in memory keeping of its old intent.
We started, looked again with anxious eyes,

* A local word for Sledge.

And in that griesly object recognise
The Curate's Dog—his long-tryed friend, for they,
As well we knew, together had grown grey.
The Master died, his drooping servant's grief
Found at the Widow's feet some sad relief ;
Yet still he lived in pining discontent,
Sadness which no indulgence could prevent ;
Hence whole day wanderings, broken nightly sleeps
And lonesome watch that out of doors he keeps ;
Not oftentimes, I trust, as we, poor brute !
Espied him on his legs sustained, blank, mute,
And of all visible motion destitute,
So that the very heaving of his breath
Seemed stopt, though by some other power than
death.

Long as we gazed upon the form and face,
A mild domestic pity kept its place,
Unscared by thronging fancies of strange hue
That haunted us in spite of what we knew.
Even now I sometimes think of him as lost
In second-sight appearances, or crost
By spectral shapes of guilt, or to the ground,
On which he stood, by spells unnatural bound,
Like a gaunt shaggy Porter forced to wait
In days of old romance at Archimago's gate.

Advancing Summer, Nature's law fulfilled,
The choristers in every grove had stilled ;
But we, we lacked not music of our own,
For lightsome Fanny had thus early thrown,
Mid the gay prattle of those infant tongues,
Some notes prelusive, from the round of songs
With which, more zealous than the liveliest bird
That in wild Arden's brakes was ever heard,
Her work and her work's partners she can cheer,
The whole day long, and all days of the year.

Thus gladdened from our own dear Vale we pass
And soon approach Diana's Looking-glass !
To Loughrigg-tarn, round clear and bright as
heaven,
Such name Italian fancy would have given,
Ere on its banks the few grey cabins rose
That yet disturb not its concealed repose
More than the feeblest wind that idly blows.

Ah, Beaumont ! when an opening in the road
Stopped me at once by charm of what it showed,
The encircling region vividly exprest
Within the mirror's depth, a world at rest—
Sky streaked with purple, grove and craggy field *,
And the smooth green of many a pendent fall,

* A word common in the country, signifying shelter, as
in Scotland.

And, quieted and soothed, a torrent small,
 A little daring would-be waterfall,
 One chimney smoking and its azure wreath,
 Associate all in the calm Pool beneath,
 With here and there a faint imperfect gleam
 Of water-lilies veiled in misty steam—
 What wonder at this hour of stillness deep,
 A shadowy link 'tween wakefulness and sleep,
 When Nature's self, amid such blending, seems
 To render visible her own soft dreams,
 If, mixed with what appeared of rock, lawn, wood,
 Fondly embosomed in the tranquil flood,
 A glimpse I caught of that Abode, by Thee
 Designed to rise in humble privacy,
 A lowly Dwelling, here to be outspread,
 Like a small Hamlet, with its bashful head
 Half hid in native trees. Alas 'tis not,
 Nor ever was; I sighed, and left the spot
 Unconscious of its own untoward lot,
 And thought in silence, with regret too keen,
 Of unexperienced joys that might have been;
 Of neighbourhood and intermingling arts,
 And golden summer days uniting cheerful hearts.
 But time, irrevocable time, is flown,
 And let us utter thanks for blessings sown
 And reaped—what hath been, and what is, our own.

Not far we travelled ere a shout of glee,
 Startling us all, dispersed my reverie;
 Such shout as many a sportive echo meeting
 Oft-times from Alpine *chalets* sends a greeting.
 Whence the blithe hail? behold a Peasant stand
 On high, a kerchief waving in her hand!
 Not unexpectant that by early day
 Our little Band would thrid this mountain way,
 Before her cottage on the bright hill side
 She hath advanced with hope to be desried.
 Right gladly answering signals we displayed,
 Moving along a tract of morning shade,
 And vocal wishes sent of like good will
 To our kind Friend high on the sunny hill—
 Luminous region, fair as if the prime
 Were tempting all astrir to look aloft or climb;
 Only the centre of the shining cot
 With door left open makes a gloomy spot,
 Emblem of those dark corners sometimes found
 Within the happiest breast on earthly ground.

Rich prospect left behind of stream and vale,
 And mountain-tops, a barren ridge we scale;
 Descend and reach, in Yewdale's depths, a plain
 With haycocks studded, striped with yellowing
 grain—
 An area level as a Lake and spread

Under a rock too steep for man to tread,
 Where sheltered from the north and bleak north-
 west

Aloft the Raven hangs a visible nest,
 Fearless of all assaults that would her brood molest
 Hot sunbeams fill the steaming vale; but hark,
 At our approach, a jealous watch-dog's bark,
 Noise that brings forth no liveried Page of state,
 But the whole household, that our coming wait.
 With Young and Old warm greetings we exchange
 And jocund smiles, and toward the lowly Grange
 Press forward by the teasing dogs unscared.
 Entering, we find the morning meal prepared:
 So down we sit, though not till each had cast
 Pleased looks around the delicate repast—
 Rich cream, and snow-white eggs fresh from the
 nest,

With amber honey from the mountain's breast;
 Strawberries from lane or woodland, offering wild
 Of children's industry, in hillocks piled;
 Cakes for the nonce, and butter fit to lie
 Upon a lordly dish; frank hospitality
 Where simple art with bounteous nature vied,
 And cottage comfort shunned not seemly pride.

Kind Hostess! Handmaid also of the feast,
 If thou be lovelier than the kindling East,
 Words by thy presence unrestrained may speak
 Of a perpetual dawn from brow and cheek
 Instinct with light whose sweetest promise lies,
 Never retiring, in thy large dark eyes,
 Dark but to every gentle feeling true,
 As if their lustre flowed from ether's purest blue.

Let me not ask what tears may have been wept
 By those bright eyes, what weary vigils kept,
 Beside that hearth what sighs may have been
 heaved

For wounds inflicted, nor what toil relieved
 By fortitude and patience, and the grace
 Of heaven in pity visiting the place.
 Not unadvisedly those secret springs
 I leave unsearched: enough that memory clings,
 Here as elsewhere, to notices that make
 Their own significance for hearts awake,
 To rural incidents, whose genial powers
 Filled with delight three summer morning hours.

More could my pen report of grave or gay
 That through our gipsy travel cheered the way;
 But, bursting forth above the waves, the Sun
 Laughs at my pains, and seems to say, "Be done."
 Yet, Beaumont, thou wilt not, I trust, reprove
 This humble offering made by Truth to Love,

Nor chide the Muse that stooped to break a spell
Which might have else been on me yet:—

FAREWELL.

UPON PERUSING THE FOREGOING EPISTLE THIRTY
YEARS AFTER ITS COMPOSITION.

Soon did the Almighty Giver of all rest
Take those dear young Ones to a fearless nest;
And in Death's arms has long reposed the Friend
For whom this simple Register was penned.
Thanks to the moth that spared it for our eyes;
And Strangers even the slighted Scroll may prize,
Loved by the touch of kindred sympathies.
For—save the calm, repentance sheds o'er strife
Raised by remembrances of misused life,
The light from past endeavours purely willed
And by Heaven's favour happily fulfilled;
Have hope that we, yet bound to Earth, may share
The joys of the Departed—what so fair
Is blameless pleasure, not without some tears,
Reviewed through Love's transparent veil of years?

Note.—LOUGHBRIGG TARN, alluded to in the foregoing
epistle, resembles, though much smaller in compass, the
Lake Nemi, or *Speculum Diane* as it is often called, not
only in its clear waters and circular form, and the beauty
immediately surrounding it, but also as being overlooked
by the eminence of Langdale Pikes as Lake Nemi is by
that of Monte Calvo. Since this Epistle was written
Loughbrigg Tarn has lost much of its beauty by the felling
of many natural clumps of wood, relics of the old forest,
particularly upon the farm called "The Oaks," from the
abundance of that tree which grew there.

It is to be regretted, upon public grounds, that Sir George
Saumont did not carry into effect his intention of con-
structing here a Summer Retreat in the style I have
described; as his taste would have set an example how
buildings, with all the accommodations modern society
requires, might be introduced even into the most secluded
parts of this country without injuring their native cha-
racter. The design was not abandoned from failure of
inclination on his part, but in consequence of local un-
favourableness which need not be particularised.

II.

GOLD AND SILVER FISHES IN A VASE.

The soaring lark is blest as proud
When at heaven's gate she sings;
The roving bee proclaims aloud
Her flight by vocal wings;
While Ye, in lasting durance pent,
Your silent lives employ
For something more than dull content,
Though haply less than joy.

Yet might your glassy prison seem
A place where joy is known,
Where golden flash and silver gleam
Have meanings of their own;
While, high and low, and all about,
Your motions, glittering Elves!
Ye weave—no danger from without,
And peace among yourselves.

Type of a sunny human breast
Is your transparent cell;
Where Fear is but a transient guest,
No sullen Humours dwell;
Where, sensitive of every ray
That smites this tiny sea,
Your scaly panoplies repay
The loan with usury.

How beautiful!—Yet none knows why
This ever-graceful change,
Renewed—renewed incessantly—
Within your quiet range.
Is it that ye with conscious skill
For mutual pleasure glide;
And sometimes, not without your will,
Are dwarfed, or magnified?

Fays, Genii of gigantic size!
And now, in twilight dim,
Clustering like constellated eyes,
In wings of Cherubim,
When the fierce orbs abate their glare;—
Whate'er your forms express,
Whate'er ye seem, whate'er ye are—
All leads to gentleness.

Cold though your nature be, 'tis pure;
Your birthright is a fence
From all that haughtier kinds endure
Through tyranny of sense.
Ah! not alone by colours bright
Are Ye to heaven allied,
When, like essential Forms of light,
Ye mingle, or divide.

For day-dreams soft as e'er beguiled
Day-thoughts while limbs repose;
For moonlight fascinations mild,
Your gift, ere shutters close—
Accept, mute Captives! thanks and praise;
And may this tribute prove
That gentle admirations raise
Delight resembling love.

III.

LIBERTY.

(SEQUEL TO THE ABOVE.)

[ADDRESSED TO A FRIEND; THE GOLD AND SILVER FISHES
HAVING BEEN REMOVED TO A POOL IN THE PLEASURE-
GROUND OF EYDAL MOUNT.]

'The liberty of a people consists in being governed by laws which they have made for themselves, under whatever form it be of government. The liberty of a private man, in being master of his own time and actions, as far as may consist with the laws of God and of his country. Of this latter we are here to discourse.'—COWLEY.

THOSE breathing Tokens of your kind regard,
(Suspect not, Anna, that their fate is hard ;
Not soon does aught to which mild fancies cling
In lonely spots, become a slighted thing ;)
Those silent Inmates now no longer share,
Nor do they need, our hospitable care,
Removed in kindness from their glassy Cell
To the fresh waters of a living Well—
An elfin pool so sheltered that its rest
No winds disturb ; the mirror of whose breast
Is smooth as clear, save where with dimples small
A fly may settle, or a blossom fall.

—There swims, of blazing sun and beating shower
Fearless (but how obscured !) the golden Power,
That from his bauble prison used to cast
Gleams by the richest jewel unsurpass'd ;
And near him, darkling like a sullen Gnome,
The silver Tenant of the crystal dome ;
Dissevered both from all the mysteries
Of hue and altering shape that charmed all eyes.
Alas ! they pined, they languished while they shone ;
And, if not so, what matters beauty gone
And admiration lost, by change of place
That brings to the inward creature no disgrace ?
But if the change restore his birthright, then,
Whate'er the difference, boundless is the gain.
Who can divine what impulses from God
Reach the caged lark, within a town-abode,
From his poor inch or two of daisied sod ?
O yield him back his privilege !—No sea
Swell like the bosom of a man set free ;
A wilderness is rich with liberty.

Roll on, ye spouting whales, who die or keep
Your independence in the fathomless Deep !
Spread, tiny nautilus, the living sail ;
Dive, at thy choice, or brave the freshening gale !
If unreprieved the ambitious eagle mount
Sunward to seek the daylight in its fount,
Bays, gulfs, and ocean's Indian width, shall be,
Till the world perishes, a field for thee !

While musing here I sit in shadow cool,
And watch these mute Companions, in the pool,
(Among reflected boughs of leafy trees)
By glimpses caught—disporting at their ease,
Enlivened, braced, by hardy luxuries,
I ask what warrant fixed them (like a spell
Of witchcraft fixed them) in the crystal cell ;
To wheel with languid motion round and round,
Beautiful, yet in mournful durance bound.
Their peace, perhaps, our lightest footfall marred
On their quick sense our sweetest music jarred ;
And whither could they dart, if seized with fear ?
No sheltering stone, no tangled root was near.
When fire or taper ceased to cheer the room,
They wore away the night in starless gloom ;
And, when the sun first dawned upon the streams
How faint their portion of his vital beams !
Thus, and unable to complain, they fared,
While not one joy of ours by them was shared.

Is there a cherished bird (I venture now
To snatch a sprig from Chaucer's reverend brow)—
Is there a brilliant fondling of the cage,
Though sure of plaudits on his costly stage,
Though fed with dainties from the snow-white hand
Of a kind mistress, fairest of the land,
But gladly would escape ; and, if need were,
Scatter the colours from the plumes that bear
The emancipated captive through blithe air
Into strange woods, where he at large may live
On best or worst which they and Nature give ?
The beetle loves his unpretending track,
The snail the house he carries on his back ;
The far-fetched worm with pleasure would disown
The bed we give him, though of softest down ;
A noble instinct ; in all kinds the same,
All ranks ! What Sovereign, worthy of the name
If doomed to breathe against his lawful will
An element that flatters him—to kill,
But would rejoice to barter outward show
For the least boon that freedom can bestow !

But most the Bard is true to inborn right,
Lark of the dawn, and Philomel of night,
Exults in freedom, can with rapture vouch
For the dear blessings of a lowly couch,
A natural meal—days, months, from Nature's hand
Time, place, and business, all at his command !—
Who bends to happier duties, who more wise
Than the industrious Poet, taught to prize,
Above all grandeur, a pure life uncrossed
By cares in which simplicity is lost ?
That life—the flowery path that winds by stealth—
Which Horace needed for his spirit's health ;

ighed for, in heart and genius, overcome
 y noise and strife, and questions wearisome,
 nd the vain splendours of Imperial Rome?—
 et easy mirth his social hours inspire,
 nd fiction animate his sportive lyre,
 ttuned to verse that, crowning light Distress
 ith garlands, cheats her into happiness;
 ive me the humblest note of those sad strains
 rawn forth by pressure of his gilded chains,
 s a chance-sunbeam from his memory fell
 pon the Sabine farm he loved so well;
 r when the prattle of Blandusia's spring
 aunted his ear—he only listening—
 e proud to please, above all rivals, fit
 o win the palm of gaiety and wit;
 e, doubt not, with involuntary dread,
 rinking from each new favour to be shed,
 y the world's Ruler, on his honoured head!

In a deep vision's intellectual scene,
 ch earnest longings and regrets as keen
 epressed the melancholy Cowley, laid
 nder a fancied yew-tree's luckless shade;
 doleful bower for penitential song,
 here Man and Muse complained of mutual wrong;
 hile Cam's ideal current glided by,
 nd antique towers nodded their foreheads high,
 adels dear to studious privacy.
 at Fortune, who had long been used to sport
 ith this tried Servant of a thankless Court,
 lenting met his wishes; and to you
 he remnant of his days at least was true;
 ou, whom, though long deserted, he loved best;
 ou, Muses, books, fields, liberty, and rest!

Far happier they who, fixing hope and aim
 n the humanities of peaceful fame,
 ter betimes with more than martial fire
 e generous course, aspire, and still aspire;
 held by warnings heeded not too late
 fle the contradictions of their fate,
 nd to one purpose cleave, their Being's godlike
 mate!

Thus, gifted Friend, but with the placid brow
 at woman ne'er should forfeit, keep *thy* vow;
 ith modest scorn reject whate'er would blind
 e ethereal eyesight, cramp the wingèd mind!
 en, with a blessing granted from above
 every act, word, thought, and look of love,
 e's book for Thee may lie unclosed, till age
 all with a thankful tear bedrop its latest page*.

1829.

There is now, alas! no possibility of the anticipation,
 h which the above Epistle concludes, being realised:

IV.

POOR ROBIN.*

Now when the primrose makes a splendid show,
 And lilies face the March-winds in full blow,
 And humbler growths as moved with one desire
 Put on, to welcome spring, their best attire,
 Poor Robin is yet flowerless; but how gay
 With his red stalks upon this sunny day!
 And, as his tufts of leaves he spreads, content
 With a hard bed and scanty nourishment,
 Mixed with the green, some shine not lacking power
 To rival summer's brightest scarlet flower;
 And flowers they well might seem to passers-by
 If looked at only with a careless eye;
 Flowers—or a richer produce (did it suit
 The season) sprinklings of ripe strawberry fruit.

But while a thousand pleasures come unsought,
 Why fix upon his wealth or want a thought?
 Is the string touched in prelude to a lay
 Of pretty fancies that would round him play
 When all the world acknowledged elfin sway?
 Or does it suit our humour to commend
 Poor Robin as a sure and crafty friend,
 Whose practice teaches, spite of names to show
 Bright colours whether they deceive or no?—
 Nay, we would simply praise the free good-will
 With which, though slighted, he, on naked hill
 Or in warm valley, seeks his part to fill;
 Cheerful alike if bare of flowers as now,
 Or when his tiny gems shall deck his brow:
 Yet more, we wish that men by men despised,
 And such as lift their foreheads overprized,
 Should sometimes think, where'er they chance to spy
 This child of Nature's own humility,

nor were the verses ever seen by the Individual for whom
 they were intended. She accompanied her husband, the
 Rev. Wm. Fletcher, to India, and died of cholera, at
 the age of thirty-two or thirty-three years, on her way
 from Shalapore to Bombay, deeply lamented by all who
 knew her.

Her enthusiasm was ardent, her piety steadfast; and her
 great talents would have enabled her to be eminently useful
 in the difficult path of life to which she had been called.
 The opinion she entertained of her own performances,
 given to the world under her maiden name, Jewsbury, was
 modest and humble, and, indeed, far below their merits;
 as is often the case with those who are making trial of
 their powers, with a hope to discover what they are best
 fitted for. In one quality, viz., quickness in the motions of
 her mind, she had, within the range of the Author's
 acquaintance, no equal.

* The small wild Geranium known by that name.

What recompense is kept in store or left
 For all that seem neglected or bereft;
 With what nice care equivalents are given,
 How just, how bountiful, the hand of Heaven.

MARCH, 1840

v.

THE GLEANER.

(SUGGESTED BY A PICTURE.)

THAT happy gleam of vernal eyes,
 Those locks from summer's golden skies,
 That o'er thy brow are shed;
 That cheek—a kindling of the morn,
 That lip—a rose-bud from the thorn,
 I saw; and Fancy sped
 To scenes Arcadian, whispering, through soft air,
 Of bliss that grows without a care,
 And happiness that never flies—
 (How can it where love never dies?)
 Whispering of promise, where no blight
 Can reach the innocent delight;
 Where pity, to the mind conveyed
 In pleasure, is the darkest shade
 That Time, unwrinkled grandsire, flings
 From his smoothly gliding wings.

What mortal form, what earthly face
 Inspired the pencil, lines to trace,
 And mingle colours, that should breed
 Such rapture, nor want power to feed;
 For had thy charge been idle flowers,
 Fair Damsel! o'er my captive mind,
 To truth and sober reason blind,
 'Mid that soft air, those long-lost bowers,
 The sweet illusion might have hung, for hours.

Thanks to this tell-tale sheaf of corn,
 That touchingly bespeaks thee born
 Life's daily tasks with them to share
 Who, whether from their lowly bed
 They rise, or rest the weary head,
 Ponder the blessing they entreat
 From Heaven, and *feel* what they repeat,
 While they give utterance to the prayer
 That asks for daily bread.

1828.

vi.

TO A REDBREAST—(IN SICKNESS).

STAY, little cheerful Robin! stay,
 And at my casement sing,
 Though it should prove a farewell lay
 And this our parting spring.

Though I, alas! may ne'er enjoy
 The promise in thy song;
 A charm, *that* thought can not destroy,
 Doth to thy strain belong.

Methinks that in my dying hour
 Thy song would still be dear,
 And with a more than earthly power
 My passing Spirit cheer.

Then, little Bird, this boon confer,
 Come, and my requiem sing,
 Nor fail to be the harbinger
 Of everlasting Spring.

S. H.

vii.

FLOATING ISLAND.

These lines are by the Author of the Address to the Wind, &c. published heretofore along with my Poem The above to a Redbreast are by a deceased female Relative.

HARMONIOUS Powers with Nature work
 On sky, earth, river, lake and sea;
 Sunshine and cloud, whirlwind and breeze,
 All in one duteous task agree.

Once did I see a slip of earth
 (By throbbing waves long undermined)
 Loosed from its hold; how, no one knew,
 But all might see it float, obedient to the wind;

Might see it, from the mossy shore
 Dissevered, float upon the Lake,
 Float with its crest of trees adorned
 On which the warbling birds their pastime take.

Food, shelter, safety, there they find;
 There berries ripen, flowerets bloom;
 There insects live their lives, and die;
 A peopled world it is; in size a tiny room.

And thus through many seasons' space
 This little Island may survive;
 But Nature, though we mark her not,
 Will take away, may cease to give.

chance when you are wandering forth
 on some vacant sunny day,
 without an object, hope, or fear,
 neither your eyes may turn—the Isle is passed
 away;

ried beneath the glittering Lake,
 place no longer to be found;
 et the lost fragments shall remain
 fertilize some other ground.

D. W.

VIII.

'Late, late yestreen I saw the new moone
 Wi' the auld moone in hir arme.'

Ballad of Sir Patrick Spence, Percy's Reliques.

CE I could hail (howe'er serene the sky)
 The Moon re-entering her monthly round,
 My faculty yet given me to espy
 The dusky Shape within her arms imbound,
 That thin memento of effulgence lost
 Which some have named her Predecessor's ghost.

Young, like the Crescent that above me shone,
 Bright I perceived within it dull or dim;
 That appeared was suitable to One
 Whose fancy had a thousand fields to skim;
 Expectations spreading with wild growth,
 And hope that kept with me her plighted troth.

Low (ambition quickening at the view)
 A silver boat launched on a boundless flood;
 Aearly crest, like Dian's when it threw
 Its brightest splendour round a leafy wood;
 I saw not a hint from under-ground, no sign
 For the glimmering brow of Proserpine.

Was it Dian's self that seemed to move
 Before me?—nothing blemished the fair sight;
 Cher I looked whom jocond Fairies love,
 Cynthia, who puts the little stars to flight,
 And by that thinning magnifies the great,
 In exaltation of her sovereign state.

And when I learned to mark the spectral Shape
 Each new Moon obeyed the call of Time,
 In gloom fell on me, swift was my escape;
 Such happy privilege hath life's gay Prime,
 To see or not to see, as best may please
 A joyant Spirit, and a heart at ease.

Not, dazzling Stranger! when thou meet'st my
 glance,
 That dark Associate ever I discern;

Emblem of thoughts too eager to advance
 While I salute my joys, thoughts sad or stern;
 Shades of past bliss, or phantoms that, to gain
 Their fill of promised lustre, wait in vain.

So changes mortal Life with fleeting years;
 A mournful change, should Reason fail to bring
 The timely insight that can temper fears,
 And from vicissitude remove its sting;
 While Faith aspires to seats in that domain
 Where joys are perfect—neither wax nor wane.

1826.

IX.

TO THE LADY FLEMING,

ON SEEING THE FOUNDATION PREPARING FOR THE EREC-
 TION OF RYDAL CHAPEL, WESTMORELAND.

I.

BLEST is this Isle—our native Land;
 Where battlement and moated gate
 Are objects only for the hand
 Of hoary Time to decorate;
 Where shady hamlet, town that breathes
 Its busy smoke in social wreaths,
 No rampart's stern defence require,
 Nought but the heaven-directed spire,
 And steeple tower (with pealing bells
 Far-heard)—our only citadels.

II.

O Lady! from a noble line
 Of chieftains sprung, who stoutly bore
 The spear, yet gave to works divine
 A bounteous help in days of yore,
 (As records mouldering in the Dell
 Of Nightshade* haply yet may tell;)—
 Thee kindred aspirations moved
 To build, within a vale beloved,
 For Him upon whose high behests
 All peace depends, all safety rests.

III.

How fondly will the woods embrace
 This daughter of thy pious care,
 Lifting her front with modest grace
 To make a fair recess more fair;
 And to exalt the passing hour;
 Or soothe it with a healing power
 Drawn from the Sacrifice fulfilled,
 Before this rugged soil was tilled,
 Or human habitation rose
 To interrupt the deep repose!

* Bekangs Ghyll—or the dell of Nightshade—in which
 stands St. Mary's Abbey in Low Furness.

IV.

Well may the villagers rejoice !
 Nor heat, nor cold, nor weary ways,
 Will be a hindrance to the voice
 That would unite in prayer and praise ;
 More duly shall wild wandering Youth
 Receive the curb of sacred truth,
 Shall tottering Age, bent earthward, hear
 The Promise, with uplifted ear ;
 And all shall welcome the new ray
 Imparted to their sabbath-day.

V.

Nor deem the Poet's hope misplaced,
 His fancy cheated—that can see
 A shade upon the future cast,
 Of time's pathetic sanctity ;
 Can hear the monitory clock
 Sound o'er the lake with gentle shock
 At evening, when the ground beneath
 Is ruffled o'er with cells of death ;
 Where happy generations lie,
 Here tutored for eternity.

VI.

Lives there a man whose sole delights
 Are trivial pomp and city noise,
 Hardening a heart that loathes or slights
 What every natural heart enjoys ?
 Who never caught a noon-tide dream
 From murmur of a running stream ;
 Could strip, for aught the prospect yields
 To him, their verdure from the fields ;
 And take the radiance from the clouds
 In which the sun his setting shrouds.

VII.

A soul so pitiably forlorn,
 If such do on this earth abide,
 May season apathy with scorn,
 May turn indifference to pride ;
 And still be not unblest—compared
 With him who grovels, self-debarred
 From all that lies within the scope
 Of holy faith and christian hope ;
 Or, shipwreck'd, kindles on the coast
 False fires, that others may be lost.

VIII.

Alas ! that such perverted zeal
 Should spread on Britain's favoured ground !
 That public order, private weal,
 Should e'er have felt or feared a wound
 From champions of the desperate law
 Which from their own blind hearts they draw ;

Who tempt their reason to deny
 God, whom their passions dare defy,
 And boast that they alone are free
 Who reach this dire extremity !

IX.

But turn we from these ' bold bad ' men ;
 The way, mild Lady ! that hath led
 Down to their ' dark opprobrious den,'
 Is all too rough for Thee to tread.
 Softly as morning vapours glide
 Down Rydal-cove from Fairfield's side,
 Should move the tenor of *his* song
 Who means to charity no wrong ;
 Whose offering gladly would accord
 With this day's work, in thought and word.

X.

Heaven prosper it ! may peace, and love,
 And hope, and consolation, fall,
 Through its meek influence, from above,
 And penetrate the hearts of all ;
 All who, around the hallowed Fane,
 Shall sojourn in this fair domain ;
 Grateful to Thee, while service pure,
 And ancient ordinance, shall endure,
 For opportunity bestowed
 To kneel together, and adore their God !

1823.

X.

ON THE SAME OCCASION.

Oh ! gather whenceso'er ye safely may
 The help which slackening Piety requires ;
 Nor deem that he perforce must go astray
 Who treads upon the footmarks of his sire.

Our churches, invariably perhaps, stand east and west
 but *why* is by few persons *exactly* known ; nor, then,
 the degree of deviation from *due* east often noticeable
 in the ancient ones was determined, in each particular
 case, by the point in the horizon, at which the sun rose
 upon the day of the saint to whom the church was
 dedicated. These observances of our ancestors, and
 the causes of them, are the subject of the following
 stanzas.

WHEN in the antique age of bow and spear
 And feudal rapine clothed with iron mail,
 Came ministers of peace, intent to rear
 The Mother Church in yon sequestered vale ;

Then, to her Patron Saint a previous rite
 Resounded with deep swell and solemn close,
 Through unremitting vigils of the night,
 Till from his couch the wished-for Sun uprose.

rose, and straight—as by divine command,
 they, who had waited for that sign to trace
 their work's foundation, gave with careful hand
 to the high altar its determined place ;

indful of Him who in the Orient born
 here lived, and on the cross his life resigned,
 and who, from out the regions of the morn,
 quing in pomp, shall come to judge mankind.

taught *their* creed ;—nor failed the eastern sky,
 id these more awful feelings, to infuse
 e sweet and natural hopes that shall not die,
 ng as the sun his gladsome course renews.

er us bath such prelusive vigil ceased ;
 t still we plant, like men of elder days
 r christian altar faithful to the east,
 hence the tall window drinks the morning rays ;

at obvious emblem giving to the eye
 (meek devotion, which erewhile it gave,
 at symbol of the day-spring from on high,
 umphant o'er the darkness of the grave.

1823.

XI.

THE HORN OF EGREMONT CASTLE.

the Brothers through the gateway
 led forth with old and young,
 the Horn Sir Eustace pointed
 which for ages there had hung.
 When it was which none could sound,
 None upon living ground,
 He who came as rightful Heir
 of Egremont's Domains and Castle fair.

From times of earliest record
 of the House of Lucie born,
 No of right had held the Lordship
 Claimed by proof upon the Horn :
 Ehen at the appointed hour
 Told the Horn,—it owned his power ;
 Ewas acknowledged : and the blast,
 Which good Sir Eustace sounded, was the last.

With his lance Sir Eustace pointed,
 As to Hubert thus said he,
 "What I speak this Horn shall witness
 For thy better memory.
 But, then, and neglect me not !
 At his time, and on this spot,
 Thy words are uttered from my heart,
 And my last earnest prayer ere we depart.

On good service we are going
 Life to risk by sea and land,
 In which course if Christ our Saviour
 Do my sinful soul demand,
 Hither come thou back straightway,
 Hubert, if alive that day ;
 Return, and sound the Horn, that we
 May have a living House still left in thee !"

"Fear not," quickly answered Hubert ;
 "As I am thy Father's son,
 What thou askest, noble Brother,
 With God's favour shall be done."
 So were both right well content :
 Forth they from the Castle went,
 And at the head of their Array
 To Palestine the Brothers took their way.

Side by side they fought (the Lucies
 Were a line for valour famed)
 And where'er their strokes alighted,
 There the Saracens were tamed.
 Whence, then, could it come—the thought—
 By what evil spirit brought ?
 Oh ! can a brave Man wish to take
 His Brother's life, for Lands' and Castle's sake ?

"Sir !" the Ruffians said to Hubert,
 "Deep he lies in Jordan flood."
 Stricken by this ill assurance,
 Pale and trembling Hubert stood.
 "Take your earnings."—Oh ! that I
 Could have *seen* my Brother die !
 It was a pang that vexed him then ;
 And oft returned, again, and yet again.

Months passed on, and no Sir Eustace !
 Nor of him were tidings heard.
 Wherefore, bold as day, the Murderer
 Back again to England steered.
 To his Castle Hubert sped ;
 Nothing has he now to dread.
 But silent and by stealth he came,
 And at an hour which nobody could name.

None could tell if it were night-time,
 Night or day, at even or morn ;
 No one's eye had seen him enter,
 No one's ear had heard the Horn.
 But bold Hubert lives in glee :
 Months and years went smilingly ;
 With plenty was his table spread ;
 And bright the Lady is who shares his bed.

Likewise he had sons and daughters ;
 And, as good men do, he sate
 At his board by these surrounded,
 Flourishing in fair estate.
 And while thus in open day
 Once he sate, as old books say,
 A blast was uttered from the Horn,
 Where by the Castle-gate it hung forlorn.

'Tis the breath of good Sir Eustace !
 He is come to claim his right :
 Ancient castle, woods, and mountains
 Hear the challenge with delight.
 Hubert ! though the blast be blown
 He is helpless and alone :
 Thou hast a dungeon, speak the word !
 And there he may be lodged, and thou be Lord.

Speak !—astounded Hubert cannot ;
 And, if power to speak he had,
 All are daunted, all the household
 Smitten to the heart, and sad.
 'Tis Sir Eustace ; if it be
 Living man, it must be he !
 Thus Hubert thought in his dismay,
 And by a postern-gate he slunk away.

Long, and long was he unheard of :
 To his Brother then he came,
 Made confession, asked forgiveness,
 Asked it by a brother's name,
 And by all the saints in heaven ;
 And of Eustace was forgiven :
 Then in a convent went to hide
 His melancholy head, and there he died.

But Sir Eustace, whom good angels
 Had preserved from murderers' hands,
 And from Pagan chains had rescued,
 Lived with honour on his lands.
 Sons he had, saw sons of theirs :
 And through ages, heirs of heirs,
 A long posterity renowned,
 Sounded the Horn which they alone could sound.

1806.

XII.

GOODY BLAKE AND HARRY GILL.

A TRUE STORY.

Oh ! what's the matter ? what's the matter ?
 What is 't that ails young Harry Gill ?
 That evermore his teeth they chatter,
 Chatter, chatter, chatter still !

Of waistcoats Harry has no lack,
 Good duffle grey, and flannel fine ;
 He has a blanket on his back,
 And coats enough to smother nine.

In March, December, and in July,
 'Tis all the same with Harry Gill ;
 The neighbours tell, and tell you truly,
 His teeth they chatter, chatter still.
 At night, at morning, and at noon,
 'Tis all the same with Harry Gill ;
 Beneath the sun, beneath the moon,
 His teeth they chatter, chatter still !

Young Harry was a lusty drover,
 And who so stout of limb as he ?
 His cheeks were red as ruddy clover ;
 His voice was like the voice of three.
 Old Goody Blake was old and poor ;
 Ill fed she was, and thinly clad ;
 And any man who passed her door
 Might see how poor a hut she had.

All day she spun in her poor dwelling :
 And then her three hours' work at night,
 Alas ! 'twas hardly worth the telling,
 It would not pay for candle-light.
 Remote from sheltered village-green,
 On a hill's northern side she dwelt,
 Where from sea-blasts the hawthorns lean,
 And hoary dews are slow to melt.

By the same fire to boil their pottage,
 Two poor old Dames, as I have known,
 Will often live in one small cottage ;
 But she, poor Woman ! housed alone.
 'Twas well enough when summer came,
 The long, warm, lightsome summer-day,
 Then at her door the *canty* Dame
 Would sit, as any linnet, gay.

But when the ice our streams did fether,
 Oh then how her old bones would shake !
 You would have said, if you had met her,
 'Twas a hard time for Goody Blake.
 Her evenings then were dull and dead :
 Sad case it was, as you may think,
 For very cold to go to bed ;
 And then for cold not sleep a wink.

O joy for her ! whene'er in winter
 The winds at night had made a rout ;
 And scattered many a lusty splinter
 And many a rotten bough about.

Yet never had she, well or sick,
As every man who knew her says,
A pile beforehand, turf or stick,
Enough to warm her for three days.

Now, when the frost was past enduring,
And made her poor old bones to ache,
Could any thing be more alluring
Than an old hedge to Goody Blake?
And, now and then, it must be said,
When her old bones were cold and chill,
She left her fire, or left her bed,
To seek the hedge of Harry Gill.

Now Harry he had long suspected
This trespass of old Goody Blake;
And vowed that she should be detected—
That he on her would vengeance take.
And oft from his warm fire he'd go,
And to the fields his road would take;
And there, at night, in frost and snow,
He watched to seize old Goody Blake.

And once, behind a rick of barley,
Thus looking out did Harry stand:
The moon was full and shining clearly,
And crisp with frost the stubble land.
—He hears a noise—he's all awake—
Again?—on tip-toe down the hill
He softly creeps—'tis Goody Blake;
She's at the hedge of Harry Gill!

Right glad was he when he beheld her:
Stick after stick did Goody pull:
He stood behind a bush of elder,
Till she had filled her apron full.
When with her load she turned about,
The by-way back again to take;
He started forward, with a shout,
And sprang upon poor Goody Blake.

and fiercely by the arm he took her,
and by the arm he held her fast,
and fiercely by the arm he shook her,
and cried, "I've caught you then at last!"
Then Goody, who had nothing said,
Her bundle from her lap let fall;
and, kneeling on the sticks, she prayed
to God that is the judge of all.

he prayed, her withered hand uprearing,
While Harry held her by the arm—
God! who art never out of hearing,
may he never more be warm!"

The cold, cold moon above her head,
Thus on her knees did Goody pray;
Young Harry heard what she had said:
And icy cold he turned away.

He went complaining all the morrow
That he was cold and very chill:
His face was gloom, his heart was sorrow,
Alas! that day for Harry Gill!
That day he wore a riding-coat,
But not a whit the warmer he:
Another was on Thursday brought,
And ere the Sabbath he had three.

'Twas all in vain, a useless matter,
And blankets were about him pinned;
Yet still his jaws and teeth they clatter,
Like a loose casement in the wind.
And Harry's flesh it fell away;
And all who see him say, 'tis plain,
That, live as long as live he may,
He never will be warm again.

No word to any man he utters,
A-bed or up, to young or old;
But ever to himself he mutters,
"Poor Harry Gill is very cold."
A-bed or up, by night or day;
His teeth they chatter, chatter still.
Now think, ye farmers all, I pray,
Of Goody Blake and Harry Gill!

1798.

XIII.

PRELUDE,

PREFIXED TO THE VOLUME ENTITLED "POEMS CHIEFLY
OF EARLY AND LATE YEARS."

IN desultory walk through orchard grounds,
Or some deep chestnut grove, oft have I paused
The while a Thrush, urged rather than restrained
By gusts of vernal storm, attuned his song
To his own genial instincts; and was heard
(Though not without some plaintive tones between)
To utter, above showers of blossom swept
From tossing boughs, the promise of a calm,
Which the unsheltered traveller might receive
With thankful spirit. The descant, and the wind
That seemed to play with it in love or scorn,
Encouraged and endeared the strain of words
That haply flowed from me, by fits of silence
Impelled to livelier pace. But now, my Book!
Charged with those lays, and others of like mood,

Or loftier pitch if higher rose the theme,
 Go, single—yet aspiring to be joined
 With thy Forerunners that through many a year
 Have faithfully prepared each other's way—
 Go forth upon a mission best fulfilled
 When and wherever, in this changeful world,
 Power hath been given to please for higher ends
 Than pleasure only ; gladdening to prepare
 For wholesome sadness, troubling to refine,
 Calming to raise ; and, by a sapient Art
 Diffused through all the mysteries of our Being,
 Softening the toils and pains that have not ceased
 To cast their shadows on our mother Earth
 Since the primeval doom. Such is the grace
 Which, though unsued for, fails not to descend
 With heavenly inspiration ; such the aim
 That Reason dictates ; and, as even the wish
 Has virtue in it, why should hope to me
 Be wanting that sometimes, where fancied ills
 Harass the mind and strip from off the bowers
 Of private life their natural pleasantness,
 A Voice—devoted to the love whose seeds
 Are sown in every human breast, to beauty
 Lodged within compass of the humblest sight,
 To cheerful intercourse with wood and field,
 And sympathy with man's substantial griefs—
 Will not be heard in vain ? And in those days
 When unforeseen distress spreads far and wide
 Among a People mournfully cast down,
 Or into anger roused by venal words
 In recklessness flung out to overturn
 The judgment, and divert the general heart
 From mutual good—some strain of thine, my Book !
 Caught at propitious intervals, may win
 Listeners who not unwillingly admit
 Kindly emotion tending to console
 And reconcile ; and both with young and old
 Exalt the sense of thoughtful gratitude
 For benefits that still survive, by faith
 In progress, under laws divine, maintained.

RYDAL MOUNT,
 March 26, 1842.

XIV.

TO A CHILD.

WRITTEN IN HER ALBUM.

SMALL service is true service while it lasts :
 Of humblest Friends, bright Creature ! scorn not
 one :

The Daisy, by the shadow that it casts,
 Protects the lingering dew-drop from the Sun.

1834.

XV.

LINES

WRITTEN IN THE ALBUM OF THE COUNTESS OF LONSDALE
 NOV. 5, 1834.

LADY ! a Pen (perhaps with thy regard,
 Among the Favoured, favoured not the least)
 Left, 'mid the Records of this Book inscribed,
 Deliberate traces, registers of thought
 And feeling, suited to the place and time
 That gave them birth :—months passed, and still
 this hand,

That had not been too timid to imprint
 Words which the virtues of thy Lord inspired,
 Was yet not bold enough to write of Thee.
 And why that scrupulous reserve ? In sooth
 The blameless cause lay in the Theme itself.
 Flowers are there many that delight to strive
 With the sharp wind, and seem to court the shower
 Yet are by nature careless of the sun
 Whether he shine on them or not ; and some,
 Where'er he moves along the unclouded sky,
 Turn a broad front full on his flattering beams :
 Others do rather from their notice shrink,
 Loving the dewy shade,—a humble band,
 Modest and sweet, a progeny of earth,
 Congenial with thy mind and character,
 High-born Augusta !

Witness Towers, and Grove
 And Thou, wild Stream, that giv'st the honour
 name
 Of Lowther to this ancient Line, bear witness
 From thy most secret haunts ; and ye Parterres
 Which She is pleased and proud to call her own
 Witness how oft upon my noble Friend
 Mute offerings, tribute from an inward sense
 Of admiration and respectful love,
 Have waited—till the affections could no more
 Endure that silence, and broke out in song,
 Snatches of music taken up and dropt
 Like those self-solacing, those under, notes
 Trilled by the redbreast, when autumnal leaves
 Are thin upon the bough. Mine, only mine,
 The pleasure was, and no one heard the praise,
 Checked, in the moment of its issue, checked
 And reprehended, by a fancied blush
 From the pure qualities that called it forth.

Thus Virtue lives debarred from Virtue's mee
 Thus, Lady, is retiredness a veil
 That, while it only spreads a softening charm
 O'er features looked at by discerning eyes,
 Hides half their beauty from the common gaze ;

and thus, even on the exposed and breezy hill
 lofty station, female goodness walks,
 when side by side with lunar gentleness,
 in a cloister. Yet the grateful Poor
 such the immunities of low estate,
 in Nature's enviable privilege,
 or sacred recompence for many wants)
 when their hearts before Thee, pouring out
 that they think and feel, with tears of joy ;
 and benedictions not unheard in heaven :
 and friend in the ear of friend, where speech is free
 follow truth, is eloquent as they.

When let the Book receive in these prompt lines
 just memorial ; and thine eyes consent
 read that they, who mark thy course, behold
 life declining with the golden light
 Summer, in the season of sere leaves ;
 cheerfulness undamped by stealing Time ;
 studied kindness flow with easy stream,
 illustrated with inborn courtesy ;
 Al an habitual disregard of self
 lanced by vigilance for others' weal.

and shall the Verse not tell of lighter gifts
 when these ennobling attributes conjoined
 blended, in peculiar harmony,
 Youth's surviving spirit ? What agile grace !
 nymph-like liberty, in nymph-like form,
 Beld with wonder ; whether floor or path
 Thou tread ; or sweep—borne on the managed
 steed—
 fleet as the shadows, over down or field,
 driven by strong winds at play among the clouds.

let one word more—one farewell word—a wish
 which came, but it has passed into a prayer—
 that, as thy sun in brightness is declining,
 so at an hour yet distant for *their* sakes
 whose tender love, here faltering on the way
 O divinest love, will be forgiven—
 so may it set in peace, to rise again
 everlasting glory won by faith.

XVI.

GRACE DARLING.

As the dwellers in the silent fields
 Thine heart is touched, and public way
 A crowded street resound with ballad strains,
 Inspired by ONE whose very name bespeaks
 Four divine, exalting human love ;

Whom, since her birth on bleak Northumbria's
 coast,
 Known unto few but prized as far as known,
 A single Act endears to high and low
 Through the whole land—to Manhood, moved in
 spite
 Of the world's freezing cares—to generous Youth—
 To Infancy, that lisps her praise—to Age
 Whose eye reflects it, glistening through a tear
 Of tremulous admiration. Such true fame
 Awaits her *now* ; but, verily, good deeds
 Do no imperishable record find
 Save in the rolls of heaven, where hers may live
 A theme for angels, when they celebrate
 The high-souled virtues which forgetful earth
 Has witness'd. Oh ! that winds and waves could
 speak
 Of things which their united power called forth
 From the pure depths of her humanity !
 A Maiden gentle, yet, at duty's call,
 Firm and unflinching, as the Lighthouse reared
 On the Island-rock, her lonely dwelling-place ;
 Or like the invincible Rock itself that braves,
 Age after age, the hostile elements,
 As when it guarded holy Cuthbert's cell.

All night the storm had raged, nor ceased, nor
 paused,
 When, as day broke, the Maid, through misty air,
 Espies far off a Wreck, amid the surf,
 Beating on one of those disastrous isles—
 Half of a Vessel, half—no more ; the rest
 Had vanished, swallowed up with all that there
 Had for the common safety striven in vain,
 Or thither thronged for refuge. With quick glance
 Daughter and Sire through optic-glass discern,
 Clinging about the remnant of this Ship,
 Creatures—how precious in the Maiden's sight !
 For whom, belike, the old Man grieves still more
 Than for their fellow-sufferers engulfed
 Where every parting agony is hushed,
 And hope and fear mix not in further strife.
 " But courage, Father ! let us out to sea—
 A few may yet be saved." The Daughter's words,
 Her earnest tone, and look beaming with faith,
 Dispel the Father's doubts : nor do they lack
 The noble-minded Mother's helping hand
 To launch the boat ; and with her blessing cheered,
 And inwardly sustained by silent prayer,
 Together they put forth, Father and Child !
 Each grasps an oar, and struggling on they go—
 Rivals in effort ; and, alike intent
 Here to elude and there surmount, they watch
 The billows lengthening, mutually crossed

And shattered, and re-gathering their might ;
 As if the tumult, by the Almighty's will
 Were, in the conscious sea, roused and prolonged
 That woman's fortitude—so tried, so proved—
 May brighten more and more !

True to the mark,
 They stem the current of that perilous gorge,
 Their arms still strengthening with the strength-
 ening heart,
 Though danger, as the Wreck is near'd, becomes
 More imminent. Not unseen do they approach ;
 And rapture, with varieties of fear
 Incessantly conflicting, thrills the frames
 Of those who, in that dauntless energy,
 Foretaste deliverance ; but the least perturbed
 Can scarcely trust his eyes, when he perceives
 That of the pair—tossed on the waves to bring
 Hope to the hopeless, to the dying, life—
 One is a Woman, a poor earthly sister,
 Or, be the Visitant other than she seems,
 A guardian Spirit sent from pitying Heaven,
 In woman's shape. But why prolong the tale,
 Casting weak words amid a host of thoughts
 Armed to repel them ? Every hazard faced
 And difficulty mastered, with resolve
 That no one breathing should be left to perish,
 This last remainder of the crew are all
 Placed in the little boat, then o'er the deep
 Are safely borne, landed upon the beach,
 And, in fulfilment of God's mercy, lodged
 Within the sheltering Lighthouse.—Shout, ye
 Waves !

Send forth a song of triumph. Waves and Winds,
 Exult in this deliverance wrought through faith
 In Him whose Providence your rage hath served !
 Ye screaming Sea-mews, in the concert join !
 And would that some immortal Voice—a Voice
 Fitly attuned to all that gratitude
 Breathes out from floor or couch, through pallid
 lips

Of the survivors—to the clouds might bear—
 Blended with praise of that parental love,
 Beneath whose watchful eye the Maiden grew
 Pious and pure, modest and yet so brave,
 Though young so wise, though meek so resolute —
 Might carry to the clouds and to the stars,
 Yea, to celestial Choirs, GRACE DARLING's name !

1842.

XVII.

THE RUSSIAN FUGITIVE.

PART I.

ENOUGH of rose-bud lips, and eyes
 Like harebells bathed in dew,
 Of cheek that with carnation vies,
 And veins of violet hue ;
 Earth wants not beauty that may scorn
 A likening to frail flowers ;
 Yea, to the stars, if they were born
 For seasons and for hours.

Through Moscow's gates, with gold unbarred,
 Stepped One at dead of night,
 Whom such high beauty could not guard
 From meditated blight ;
 By stealth she passed, and fled as fast
 As doth the hunted fawn,
 Nor stopped, till in the dappling east
 Appeared unwelcome dawn.

Seven days she lurked in brake and field,
 Seven nights her course renewed,
 Sustained by what her scrip might yield,
 Or berries of the wood ;
 At length, in darkness travelling on,
 When lowly doors were shut,
 The haven of her hope she won,
 Her Foster-mother's hut.

"To put your love to dangerous proof
 I come," said she, "from far ;
 For I have left my Father's roof,
 In terror of the Czar."
 No answer did the Matron give,
 No second look she cast,
 But hung upon the Fugitive,
 Embracing and embraced.

She led the Lady to a seat
 Beside the glimmering fire,
 Bathed duteously her wayworn feet,
 Prevented each desire :—
 The cricket chirped, the house-dog dozed,
 And on that simple bed,
 Where she in childhood had reposed,
 Now rests her weary head.

When she, whose couch had been the sod,
 Whose curtain, pine or thorn,
 Had breathed a sigh of thanks to God,
 Who comforts the forlorn ;
 While over her the Matron bent
 Sleep sealed her eyes, and stole
 Feeling from limbs with travel spent,
 And trouble from the soul.

Refreshed, the Wanderer rose at morn,
 And soon again was dight
 In those unworthy vestments worn
 Through long and perilous flight ;
 And "O beloved Nurse," she said,
 "My thanks with silent tears
 Have unto Heaven and You been paid :
 Now listen to my fears !

"Have you forgot"—and here she smiled—
 "The babbling flatteries
 You lavished on me when a child
 Disporting round your knees ?
 I was your lambkin, and your bird,
 Your star, your gem, your flower ;
 Light words, that were more lightly heard
 In many a cloudless hour !

"The blossom you so fondly praised
 Is come to bitter fruit ;
 A mighty One upon me gazed ;
 I spurned his lawless suit,
 And must be hidden from his wrath :
 You, Foster-father dear,
 Will guide me in my forward path ;
 I may not tarry here !

"I cannot bring to utter woe
 Your proved fidelity."—
 "Dear Child, sweet Mistress, say not so !
 For you we both would die."
 "Nay, nay, I come with semblance feigned
 And cheek embrowned by art ;
 Yet, being inwardly unstained,
 With courage will depart."

"But whither would you, could you, flee ?
 A poor Man's counsel take ;
 The Holy Virgin gives to me
 A thought for your dear sake ;
 Rest, shielded by our Lady's grace,
 And soon shall you be led
 Forth to a safe abiding-place,
 Where never foot doth tread."

PART II.

THE dwelling of this faithful pair
 In a straggling village stood,
 For One who breathed unquiet air
 A dangerous neighbourhood ;
 But wide around lay forest ground
 With thickets rough and blind ;
 And pine-trees made a heavy shade
 Impervious to the wind.

And there, sequestered from the sight,
 Was spread a treacherous swamp,
 On which the noonday sun shed light
 As from a lonely lamp ;
 And midway in the unsafe morass,
 A single Island rose
 Of firm dry ground, with healthful grass
 Adorned, and shady boughs.

The Woodman knew, for such the craft
 This Russian vassal plied,
 That never fowler's gun, nor shaft
 Of archer, there was tried ;
 A sanctuary seemed the spot
 From all intrusion free ;
 And there he planned an artful Cot
 For perfect secrecy.

With earnest pains unchecked by dread
 Of Power's far-stretching hand,
 The bold good Man his labour sped
 At nature's pure command ;
 Heart-soothed, and busy as a wren,
 While, in a hollow nook,
 She moulds her sight-eluding den
 Above a murmuring brook.

His task accomplished to his mind,
 The twain ere break of day
 Creep forth, and through the forest wind
 Their solitary way ;
 Few words they speak, nor dare to slack
 Their pace from mile to mile,
 Till they have crossed the quaking marsh,
 And reached the lonely Isle.

The sun above the pine-trees showed
 A bright and cheerful face ;
 And Ina looked for her abode,
 The promised hiding-place ;
 She sought in vain, the Woodman smiled ;
 No threshold could be seen,
 Nor roof, nor window ;—all seemed wild
 As it had ever been.

Advancing, you might guess an hour,
 The front with such nice care
 Is masked, 'if house it be or bower,'
 But in they entered are ;
 As shaggy as were wall and roof
 With branches intertwined,
 So smooth was all within, air-proof,
 And delicately lined :

And hearth was there, and maple dish,
 And cups in seemly rows,
 And couch—all ready to a wish
 For nurture or repose ;
 And Heaven doth to her virtue grant
 That here she may abide
 In solitude, with every want
 By cautious love supplied.

No queen, before a shouting crowd,
 Led on in bridal state,
 E'er struggled with a heart so proud,
 Entering her palace gate ;
 Rejoiced to bid the world farewell,
 No saintly anchoress
 E'er took possession of her cell
 With deeper thankfulness.

"Father of all, upon thy care
 And mercy am I thrown ;
 Be thou my safeguard !"—such her prayer
 When she was left alone,
 Kneeling amid the wilderness
 When joy had passed away,
 And smiles, fond efforts of distress
 To hide what they betray !

The prayer is heard, the Saints have seen,
 Diffused through form and face,
 Resolves devotedly serene ;
 That monumental grace
 Of Faith, which doth all passions tame
 That Reason *should* control ;
 And shows in the untremling frame
 A statue of the soul.

PART III.

'Tis sung in ancient minstrelsy
 That Phoebus wont to wear
 The leaves of any pleasant tree
 Around his golden hair ;

Till Daphne, desperate with pursuit
 Of his imperious love,
 At her own prayer transformed, took root,
 A laurel in the grove.

Then did the Penitent adorn
 His brow with laurel green ;
 And 'mid his bright locks never shorn
 No meaner leaf was seen ;
 And poets sage, through every age,
 About their temples wound
 The bay ; and conquerors thanked the Gods,
 With laurel chaplets crowned.

Into the mists of fabling Time
 So far runs back the praise
 Of Beauty, that disdains to climb
 Along forbidden ways ;
 That scorns temptation ; power defies
 Where mutual love is not ;
 And to the tomb for rescue flies
 When life would be a blot.

To this fair Votaress, a fate
 More mild doth Heaven ordain
 Upon her Island desolate ;
 And words, not breathed in vain,
 Might tell what intercourse she found,
 Her silence to endear ;
 What birds she tamed, what flowers the ground
 Sent forth her peace to cheer.

To one mute Presence, above all,
 Her soothed affections clung,
 A picture on the cabin wall
 By Russian usage hung—
 The Mother-maid, whose countenance bright
 With love abridged the day ;
 And, communed with by taper light,
 Chased spectral fears away.

And oft, as either Guardian came,
 The joy in that retreat
 Might any common friendship shame,
 So high their hearts would beat ;
 And to the lone Recluse, whate'er
 They brought, each visiting
 Was like the crowding of the year
 With a new burst of spring.

But, when she of her Parents thought,
 The pang was hard to bear ;
 And, if with all things not enwrought,
 That trouble still is near.

Before her flight she had not dared
 Their constancy to prove,
 Too much the heroic Daughter feared
 The weakness of their love.

Dark is the past to them, and dark
 The future still must be,
 Till pitying Saints conduct her bark
 Into a safer sea—
 Or gentle Nature close her eyes,
 And set her Spirit free
 From the altar of this sacrifice,
 In vestal purity.

Yet, when above the forest-glooms
 The white swans southward passed,
 High as the pitch of their swift plumes
 Her fancy rode the blast ;
 And bore her toward the fields of France
 Her Father's native land,
 To mingle in the rustic dance,
 The happiest of the band !

Of those beloved fields she oft
 Had heard her Father tell
 In phrase that now with echoes soft
 Haunted her lonely cell ;
 She saw the hereditary bowers,
 She heard the ancestral stream ;
 The Kremlin and its haughty towers
 Forgotten like a dream !

PART IV.

THE ever-changing Moon had traced
 Twelve times her monthly round,
 When through the unfrequented Waste
 Was heard a startling sound ;
 A shout thrice sent from one who chased
 At speed a wounded deer,
 Bounding through branches interlaced,
 And where the wood was clear.

The fainting creature took the marsh,
 And toward the Island fled,
 While plovers screamed with tumult harsh
 Above his antlered head ;
 This, Ina saw ; and, pale with fear,
 Shrank to her citadel ;
 The desperate deer rushed on, and near
 The tangled covert fell.

Across the marsh, the game in view,
 The Hunter followed fast,
 Nor paused, till o'er the stag he blew
 A death-proclaiming blast ;
 Then, resting on her upright mind,
 Came forth the Maid—" In me
 Behold," she said, " a stricken Hind
 Pursued by destiny !

" From your deportment, Sir ! I deem
 That you have worn a sword,
 And will not hold in light esteem
 A suffering woman's word ;
 There is my covert, there perchance
 I might have lain concealed,
 My fortunes hid, my countenance
 Not even to you revealed.

" Tears might be shed, and I might pray,
 Crouching and terrified,
 That what has been unveiled to day,
 You would in mystery hide ;
 But I will not defile with dust
 The knee that bends to adore
 The God in heaven ;—attend, be just ;
 This ask I, and no more !

" I speak not of the winter's cold,
 For summer's heat exchanged,
 While I have lodged in this rough hold,
 From social life estranged ;
 Nor yet of trouble and alarms :
 High Heaven is my defence ;
 And every season has soft arms
 For injured Innocence.

" From Moscow to the Wilderness
 It was my choice to come,
 Lest virtue should be harbourless,
 And honour want a home ;
 And happy were I, if the Czar
 Retain his lawless will,
 To end life here like this poor deer,
 Or a lamb on a green hill."

" Are you the Maid," the Stranger cried,
 " From Gallic parents sprung,
 Whose vanishing was rumoured wide,
 Sad theme for every tongue ;
 Who foiled an Emperor's eager quest ?
 You, Lady, forced to wear
 These rude habiliments, and rest
 Your head in this dark lair ! "

But wonder, pity, soon were quelled ;
 And in her face and mien
 The soul's pure brightness he beheld
 Without a veil between :
 He loved, he hoped,—a holy flame
 Kindled 'mid rapturous tears ;
 The passion of a moment came
 As on the wings of years.

"Such bounty is no gift of chance,"
 Exclaimed he ; "righteous Heaven,
 Preparing your deliverance,
 To me the charge hath given.
 The Czar full oft in words and deeds
 Is stormy and self-willed ;
 But, when the Lady Catherine pleads,
 His violence is stilled.

"Leave open to my wish the course,
 And I to her will go ;
 From that humane and heavenly source,
 Good, only good, can flow."
 Faint sanction given, the Cavalier
 Was eager to depart,
 Though question followed question, dear
 To the Maiden's filial heart.

Light was his step,—his hopes, more light,
 Kept pace with his desires ;
 And the fifth morning gave him sight
 Of Moscow's glittering spires.

He sued :—heart-smitten by the wrong,
 To the lorn Fugitive
 The Emperor sent a pledge as strong
 As sovereign power could give.

O more than mighty change ! If e'er
 Amazement rose to pain,
 And joy's excess produced a fear
 Of something void and vain ;
 'Twas when the Parents, who had mourned
 So long the lost as dead,
 Beheld their only Child returned,
 The household floor to tread.

Soon gratitude gave way to love
 Within the Maiden's breast :
 Delivered and Deliverer move
 In bridal garments drest ;
 Meek Catherine had her own reward ;
 The Czar bestowed a dower ;
 And universal Moscow shared
 The triumph of that hour.

Flowers strewed the ground ; the nuptial feast
 Was held with costly state ;
 And there, 'mid many a noble guest,
 The Foster-parents sate ;
 Encouraged by the imperial eye,
 They shrank not into shade ;
 Great was their bliss, the honour high
 To them and nature paid !

INSCRIPTIONS.

I.

THE GROUNDS OF COLEORTON, THE SEAT OF SIR
GEORGE BEAUMONT, BART., LEICESTERSHIRE.

1808.

THE embowering rose, the acacia, and the pine,
Will not unwillingly their place resign;
But the Cedar thrive that near them stands,
Planted by Beaumont's and by Wordsworth's hands.
The wooded the silent Art with studious pains:
These groves have heard the Other's pensive strains;
Devoted thus, their spirits did unite
In interchange of knowledge and delight.
May Nature's kindest powers sustain the Tree,
And Love protect it from all injury!
And when its potent branches, wide out-thrown,
Shade the brow of this memorial Stone,
There may some Painter sit in future days,
Or some future Poet meditate his lays;
Not mindless of that distant age renowned
When Inspiration hovered o'er this ground,
The haunt of him who sang how spear and shield
In civil conflict met on Bosworth-field;
And of that famous Youth, full soon removed
From earth, perhaps by Shakspeare's self approved,
The Fletcher's Associate, Jonson's Friend beloved.

II.

IN A GARDEN OF THE SAME.

THE stone is the medal faithful to its trust
When temples, columns, towers, are laid in dust;
And 'tis a common ordinance of fate
That things obscure and small outlive the great:
Hence, when yon mansion and the flowery trim
Of this fair garden, and its alleys dim,
And all its stately trees, are passed away,
This little Niche, unconscious of decay,
By chance may still survive. And be it known
That it was scooped within the living stone,—
Not by the sluggish and ungrateful pains
Of labourer plodding for his daily gains,

But by an industry that wrought in love;
With help from female hands, that proudly strove
To aid the work, what time these walks and bowers
Were shaped to cheer dark winter's lonely hours.

III.

WRITTEN AT THE REQUEST OF SIR GEORGE BEAU-
MONT, BART., AND IN HIS NAME, FOR AN URN,
PLACED BY HIM AT THE TERMINATION OF A NEWLY-
PLANTED AVENUE, IN THE SAME GROUNDS.

THE Lime-trees, ranged before this hallowed Urn,
Shoot forth with lively power at Spring's return;
And be not slow a stately growth to rear
Of pillars, branching off from year to year,
Till they have learned to frame a darksome aisle;—
That may recal to mind that awful Pile
Where Reynolds, 'mid our country's noblest dead,
In the last sanctity of fame is laid.
—There, though by right the excelling Painter sleep
Where Death and Glory a joint sabbath keep,
Yet not the less his Spirit would hold dear
Self-hidden praise, and Friendship's private tear:
Hence, on my patrimonial grounds, have I
Raised this frail tribute to his memory;
From youth a zealous follower of the Art
That he professed; attached to him in heart;
Admiring, loving, and with grief and pride
Feeling what England lost when Reynolds died.

IV.

FOR A SEAT IN THE GROVES OF COLEORTON.

BENEATH yon eastern ridge, the craggy bound,
Rugged and high, of Charnwood's forest ground
Stand yet, but, Stranger! hidden from thy view,
The ivied Ruins of forlorn GRACE DIEU;
Erst a religious House, which day and night
With hymns resounded, and the chanted rite:
And when those rites had ceased, the Spot gave birth
To honourable Men of various worth:

There, on the margin of a streamlet wild,
 Did Francis Beaumont sport, an eager child ;
 There, under shadow of the neighbouring rocks,
 Sang youthful tales of shepherds and their flocks ;
 Unconscious prelude to heroic themes,
 Heart-breaking tears, and melancholy dreams
 Of slighted love, and scorn, and jealous rage,
 With which his genius shook the buskined stage.
 Communities are lost, and Empires die,
 And things of holy use unhallowed lie ;
 They perish ;—but the Intellect can raise,
 From airy words alone, a Pile that ne'er decays.

1808.

V.

WRITTEN WITH A PENCIL UPON A STONE IN THE
 WALL OF THE HOUSE (AN OUT-HOUSE), ON THE
 ISLAND AT GRASMERE.

RUDE is this Edifice, and Thou hast seen
 Buildings, albeit rude, that have maintained
 Proportions more harmonious, and approached
 To closer fellowship with ideal grace.
 But take it in good part :—alas ! the poor
 Vitruvius of our village had no help
 From the great City ; never, upon leaves
 Of red Morocco folio saw displayed,
 In long succession, pre-existing ghosts
 Of Beauties yet unborn—the rustic Lodge
 Antique, and Cottage with verandah graced,
 Nor lacking, for fit company, alcove,
 Green-house, shell-grot, and moss-lined hermitage.
 Thou see'st a homely Pile, yet to these walls
 The heifer comes in the snow-storm, and here
 The new-dropped lamb finds shelter from the wind.
 And hither does one Poet sometimes row
 His pinnacle, a small vagrant barge, up-piled
 With plenteous store of heath and withered fern,
 (A lading which he with his sickle cuts,
 Among the mountains) and beneath this roof
 He makes his summer couch, and here at noon
 Spreads out his limbs, while, yet unshorn, the
 Sheep,

Panting beneath the burthen of their wool,
 Lie round him, even as if they were a part
 Of his own Household : nor, while from his bed
 He looks, through the open door-place, toward the
 lake

And to the stirring breezes, does he want
 Creations lovely as the work of sleep—
 Fair sights, and visions of romantic joy !

VI.

WRITTEN WITH A SLATE PENCIL ON A STONE, ON THE
 SIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN OF BLACK COMB.

STAY, bold Adventurer ; rest awhile thy limbs
 On this commodious Seat ! for much remains
 Of hard ascent before thou reach the top
 Of this huge Eminence,—from blackness named,
 And, to far-travelled storms of sea and land,
 A favourite spot of tournament and war !
 But thee may no such boisterous visitants
 Molest ; may gentle breezes fan thy brow ;
 And neither cloud conceal, nor misty air
 Bedim, the grand terraqueous spectacle,
 From centre to circumference, unveiled !
 Know, if thou grudge not to prolong thy rest,
 That on the summit whither thou art bound,
 A geographic Labourer pitched his tent,
 With books supplied and instruments of art,
 To measure height and distance ; lonely task,
 Week after week pursued !—To him was given
 Full many a glimpse (but sparingly bestowed
 On timid man) of Nature's processes
 Upon the exalted hills. He made report
 That once, while there he plied his studious work
 Within that canvass Dwelling, colours, lines,
 And the whole surface of the out-spread map,
 Became invisible : for all around
 Had darkness fallen—unthreatened, unproclaimed—
 As if the golden day itself had been
 Extinguished in a moment ; total gloom,
 In which he sate alone, with unclosed eyes,
 Upon the blinded mountain's silent top !

1813.

VII.

WRITTEN WITH A SLATE PENCIL UPON A STONE, THE
 LARGEST OF A HEAP LYING NEAR A DESERTED
 QUARRY, UPON ONE OF THE ISLANDS AT RYDAL.

STRANGER ! this hillock of mis-shapen stones
 Is not a Ruin spared or made by time,
 Nor, as perchance thou rashly deem'st, the Cairn
 Of some old British Chief : 'tis nothing more
 Than the rude embryo of a little Dome
 Or Pleasure-house, once destined to be built
 Among the birch-trees of this rocky isle.
 But, as it chanced, Sir William having learned
 That from the shore a full-grown man might wade
 And make himself a freeman of this spot
 At any hour he chose, the prudent Knight

sisted, and the quarry and the mound
 the monuments of his unfinished task.
 The block on which these lines are traced, perhaps,
 was once selected as the corner-stone
 of that intended Pile, which would have been
 the quaint odd plaything of elaborate skill,
 that, I guess, the linnet and the thrush,
 and other little builders who dwell here,
 had wondered at the work. But blame him not,
 the old Sir William was a gentle Knight,
 bred in this vale, to which he appertained
 with all his ancestry. Then peace to him,
 and for the outrage which he had devised
 atone forgiveness!—But if thou art one
 to fire with thy impatience to become
 inmate of these mountains,—if, disturbed
 by beautiful conceptions, thou hast hewn
 out of the quiet rock the elements
 of thy trim Mansion destined soon to blaze
 in snow-white splendour,—think again; and, taught
 by old Sir William and his quarry, leave
 thy fragments to the bramble and the rose;
 there let the vernal slow-worm sun himself,
 and let the redbreast hop from stone to stone.

1800.

VIII.

On these fair vales hath many a Tree
 At Wordsworth's suit been spared;
 and from the builder's hand this Stone,
 for some rude beauty of its own,
 Was rescued by the Bard:
 so let it rest; and time will come
 When here the tender-hearted
 may heave a gentle sigh for him,
 As one of the departed.

1830.

IX.

These massy Ways, carried across these heights
 In Roman perseverance, are destroyed,
 hidden under ground, like sleeping worms.
 Now venture then to hope that Time will spare
 this humble Walk! Yet on the mountain's side
 Poet's hand first shaped it; and the steps
 of that same Bard—repeated to and fro
 at morn, at noon, and under moonlight skies
 through the vicissitudes of many a year—
 have bade the weeds to creep o'er its grey line.
 No longer, scattering to the heedless winds

The vocal raptures of fresh poesy,
 Shall he frequent these precincts; locked no more
 In earnest converse with beloved Friends,
 Here will he gather stores of ready bliss,
 As from the beds and borders of a garden
 Choice flowers are gathered! But, if Power may
 spring

Out of a farewell yearning—favoured more
 Than kindred wishes mated suitably
 With vain regrets—the Exile would consign
 This Walk, his loved possession, to the care
 Of those pure Minds that reverence the Muse.

1826.

X.

INSCRIPTIONS SUPPOSED TO BE FOUND IN AND NEAR
A HERMIT'S CELL.

1818.

I.

HOPES what are they?—Beads of morning
 Strung on slender blades of grass;
 Or a spider's web adorning
 In a strait and treacherous pass.

What are fears but voices airy?
 Whispering harm where harm is not;
 And deluding the unwary
 Till the fatal bolt is shot!

What is glory?—in the socket
 See how dying tapers fare!
 What is pride?—a whizzing rocket
 That would emulate a star.

What is friendship?—do not trust her,
 Nor the vows which she has made;
 Diamonds dart their brightest lustre
 From a palsy-shaken head.

What is truth?—a staff rejected;
 Duty?—an unwelcome clog;
 Joy?—a moon by fits reflected
 In a swamp or watery bog;

Bright, as if through ether steering,
 To the Traveller's eye it shone:
 He hath hailed it re-appearing—
 And as quickly it is gone;

Such is Joy—as quickly hidden,
 Or mis-shapen to the sight,
 And by sullen weeds forbidden
 To resume its native light.

What is youth?—a dancing billow,
(Winds behind, and rocks before !)
Age?—a drooping, tottering willow
On a flat and lazy shore.

What is peace?—when pain is over,
And love ceases to rebel,
Let the last faint sigh discover
That precedes the passing-knell !

XI.

INSCRIBED UPON A ROCK.

II.

PAUSE, Traveller ! whosoe'er thou be
Whom chance may lead to this retreat,
Where silence yields reluctantly
Even to the fleecy straggler's bleat ;

Give voice to what my hand shall trace,
And fear not lest an idle sound
Of words unsuited to the place
Disturb its solitude profound.

I saw this Rock, while vernal air
Blew softly o'er the russet heath,
Uphold a Monument as fair
As church or abbey furnisheth.

Unsullied did it meet the day,
Like marble, white, like ether, pure ;
As if, beneath, some hero lay,
Honoured with costliest sepulture.

My fancy kindled as I gazed ;
And, ever as the sun shone forth,
The flattered structure glistened, blazed,
And seemed the proudest thing on earth.

But frost had reared the gorgeous Pile
Unsound as those which Fortune builds—
To undermine with secret guile,
Sapped by the very beam that gilds.

And, while I gazed, with sudden shock
Fell the whole Fabric to the ground ;
And naked left this dripping Rock,
With shapeless ruin spread around !

XII.

III.

HAST thou seen, with flash incessant,
Bubbles gliding under ice,
Bodied forth and evanescent,
No one knows by what device ?

Such are thoughts !—A wind-swept meadow
Mimicking a troubled sea,
Such is life ; and death a shadow.
From the rock eternity !

XIII.

NEAR THE SPRING OF THE HERMITAGE.

IV.

TROUBLED long with warring notions
Long impatient of thy rod,
I resign my soul's emotions
Unto Thee, mysterious God !

What avails the kindly shelter
Yielded by this craggy rent,
If my spirit toss and welter
On the waves of discontent ?

Parching Summer hath no warrant
To consume this crystal Well ;
Rains, that make each rill a torrent,
Neither sully it nor swell.

Thus, dishonouring not her station,
Would my Life present to Thee,
Gracious God, the pure oblation
Of divine tranquillity !

XIV.

V.

Nor seldom, clad in radiant vest,
Deceitfully goes forth the Morn ;
Not seldom Evening in the west
Sinks smilingly forsworn.

The smoothest seas will sometimes prove,
To the confiding Bark, untrue ;
And, if she trust the stars above,
They can be treacherous too.

The umbrageous Oak, in pomp outspread,
Full oft, when storms the welkin rend,
Draws lightning down upon the head
It promised to defend.

But Thou art true, incarnate Lord,
Who didst vouchsafe for man to die ;
Thy smile is sure, thy plighted word
No change can falsify !

I bent before thy gracious throne,
And asked for peace on suppliant knee ;
And peace was given,—nor peace alone,
But faith sublimed to ecstasy !

XV.

AT THE SPOT WHERE THE HERMITAGE STOOD ON
ST. HERBERT'S ISLAND, DERWENT-WATER.

Thou in the dear love of some one Friend
Hast been so happy that thou know'st what thoughts
Will sometimes in the happiness of love
Make the heart sink, then wilt thou reverence
This quiet spot ; and, Stranger ! not unmoved
Wilt thou behold this shapeless heap of stones,
The desolate ruins of St. Herbert's Cell.
Here stood his threshold ; here was spread the roof
That sheltered him, a self-secluded Man,
After long exercise in social cares
At offices humane, intent to adore

The Deity, with undistracted mind,
And meditate on everlasting things,
In utter solitude.—But he had left
A Fellow-labourer, whom the good Man loved
As his own soul. And, when with eye upraised
To heaven he knelt before the crucifix,
While o'er the lake the cataract of Lodore
Pealed to his orisons, and when he paced
Along the beach of this small isle and thought
Of his Companion, he would pray that both
(Now that their earthly duties were fulfilled)
Might die in the same moment. Nor in vain
So prayed he :—as our chronicles report,
Though here the Hermit numbered his last day
Far from St. Cuthbert his beloved Friend,
Those holy Men both died in the same hour.

1800.

XVI.

ON THE BANKS OF A ROCKY STREAM.

BEHOLD an emblem of our human mind
Crowded with thoughts that need a settled home,
Yet, like to eddying balls of foam
Within this whirlpool, they each other chase
Round and round, and neither find
An outlet nor a resting-place !
Stranger, if such disquietude be thine,
Fall on thy knees and sue for help divine.

SELECTIONS FROM CHAUCER

MODERNISED.

I.

THE PRIORESS' TALE.

'Call up him who left half told
The story of Cambuscan bold.'

In the following Poem no further deviation from the original has been made than was necessary for the fluent reading and instant understanding of the Author : so much, however, is the language altered since Chaucer's time, especially in pronunciation, that much was to be removed, and its place supplied with as little incongruity as possible. The ancient accent has been retained in a few conjunctions, as *also* and *alway*, from a conviction that such sprinklings of antiquity would be admitted, by persons of taste, to have a graceful accordance with the subject. The fierce bigotry of the Prioress forms a fine back-ground for her tender-hearted sympathies with the Mother and Child; and the mode in which the story is told amply atones for the extravagance of the miracle.

I.

"O LORD, our Lord ! how wondrously," (quoth she)
"Thy name in this large world is spread abroad !
For not alone by men of dignity
Thy worship is performed and precious laud ;
But by the mouths of children, gracious God !
Thy goodness is set forth ; they when they lie
Upon the breast thy name do glorify.

II.

Wherefore in praise, the worthiest that I may,
Jesu ! of thee, and the white Lily-flower
Which did thee bear, and is a Maid for aye,
To tell a story I will use my power ;
Not that I may increase her honour's dower,
For she herself is honour, and the root
Of goodness, next her Son, our soul's best boot.

III.

O Mother Maid ! O Maid and Mother free !
O bush unburnt ! burning in Moses' sight !
That down didst ravish from the Deity,
Through humbleness, the spirit that did alight
Upon thy heart, whence, through that glory's might,
Conceived was the Father's sapience,
Help me to tell it in thy reverence !

IV.

Lady ! thy goodness, thy magnificence,
Thy virtue, and thy great humility,
Surpass all science and all utterance ;
For sometimes, Lady ! ere men pray to thee
Thou goest before in thy benignity,
The light to us vouchsafing of thy prayer,
To be our guide unto thy Son so dear.

V.

My knowledge is so weak, O blissful Queen !
To tell abroad thy mighty worthiness,
That I the weight of it may not sustain ;
But as a child of twelvemonths old or less,
That laboureth his language to express,
Even so fare I ; and therefore, I thee pray,
Guide thou my song which I of thee shall say.

VI.

There was in Asia, in a mighty town,
'Mong Christian folk, a street where Jews might be
Assigned to them and given them for their own
By a great Lord, for gain and usury,
Hateful to Christ and to his company ;
And through this street who list might ride as
wend ;
Free was it, and unbarred at either end.

VII.

A little school of Christian people stood
Down at the farther end, in which there were
A nest of children come of Christian blood,
That learnèd in that school from year to year
Such sort of doctrine as men usèd there,
That is to say, to sing and read also,
As little children in their childhood do.

VIII.

Among these children was a Widow's son,
A little scholar, scarcely seven years old,
Who day by day unto this school hath gone,
And eke, when he the image did behold
Of Jesu's Mother, as he had been told,
This Child was wont to kneel adown and say
Ave Marie, as he goeth by the way.

IX.

his Widow thus her little Son hath taught
 our blissful Lady, Jesu's Mother dear,
 to worship aye, and he forgot it not ;
 for simple infant hath a ready ear.
 Sweet is the holiness of youth : and hence,
 calling to mind this matter when I may,
 Saint Nicholas in my presence standeth aye,
 for he so young to Christ did reverence.

X.

his little Child, while in the school he sate
 his Primer conning with an earnest cheer,
 he whilst the rest their anthem-book repeat
 the *Alma Redemptoris* did he hear ;
 and as he durst he drew him near and near,
 and hearkened to the words and to the note,
 till the first verse he learned it all by rote.

XI.

his Latin knew he nothing what it said,
 for he too tender was of age to know ;
 but to his comrade he repaired, and prayed
 that he the meaning of this song would show,
 and unto him declare why men sing so ;
 for oftentimes, that he might be at ease,
 his child did him beseech on his bare knees.

XII.

his Schoolfellow, who elder was than he,
 answered him thus :—' This song, I have heard say,
 is fashioned for our blissful Lady free ;
 for to salute, and also her to pray
 be our help upon our dying day :
 there is more in this, I know it not ;
 how do I learn,—small grammar I have got.'

XIII.

' And is this song fashioned in reverence
 of Jesu's Mother ?' said this Innocent ;
 ' Now, certes, I will use my diligence
 till on it all ere Christmas-tide be spent ;
 though I for my Primer shall be shent,
 and shall be beaten three times in an hour,
 for the Lady I will praise with all my power.'

XIV.

his Schoolfellow, whom he had so besought,
 they went homeward taught him privily
 and then he sang it well and fearlessly,
 from word to word according to the note :
 twice in a day it passed through his throat ;
 homeward and schoolward whenceso'er he went,
 for Jesu's Mother fixed was his intent.

XV.

Through all the Jewry (this before said I)
 This little Child, as he came to and fro,
 Full merrily then would he sing and cry,
 O *Alma Redemptoris* ! high and low :
 The sweetness of Christ's Mother pierced so
 His heart, that her to praise, to her to pray,
 He cannot stop his singing by the way.

XVI.

The Serpent, Satan, our first foe, that hath
 His wasp's nest in Jew's heart, upswelled—' O woe,
 O Hebrew people !' said he in his wrath,
 ' Is it an honest thing ? Shall this be so ?
 That such a Boy where'er he lists shall go
 In your despite, and sing his hymns and saws,
 Which is against the reverence of our laws !'

XVII.

From that day forward have the Jews conspired
 Out of the world this Innocent to chase ;
 And to this end a Homicide they hired,
 That in an alley had a privy place,
 And, as the Child 'gan to the school to pace,
 This cruel Jew him seized, and held him fast
 And cut his throat, and in a pit him cast.

XVIII.

I say that him into a pit they threw,
 A loathsome pit, whence noisome scents exhale ;
 O cursed folk ! away, ye Herods new !
 What may your ill intentions you avail ?
 Murder will out ; certes it will not fail ;
 Know, that the honour of high God may spread,
 The blood cries out on your accursed deed.

XIX.

O Martyr 'stablished in virginity !
 Now may'st thou sing for aye before the throne,
 Following the Lamb celestial," quoth she,
 " Of which the great Evangelist, Saint John,
 In Patmos wrote, who saith of them that go
 Before the Lamb singing continually,
 That never fleshly woman they did know.

XX.

Now this poor widow waiteth all that night
 After her little Child, and he came not ;
 For which, by earliest glimpse of morning light,
 With face all pale with dread and busy thought,
 She at the School and elsewhere him hath sought,
 Until thus far she learned, that he had been
 In the Jews' street, and there he last was seen.

XXI.

With Mother's pity in her breast enclosed
 She goeth, as she were half out of her mind,
 To every place wherein she hath supposed
 By likelihood her little Son to find;
 And ever on Christ's Mother meek and kind
 She cried, till to the Jewry she was brought,
 And him among the accursèd Jews she sought.

XXII.

She asketh, and she piteously doth pray
 To every Jew that dwelleth in that place
 To tell her if her child had passed that way;
 They all said—Nay; but Jesu of his grace
 Gave to her thought, that in a little space
 She for her Son in that same spot did cry
 Where he was cast into a pit hard by.

XXIII.

O thou great God that dost perform thy laud
 By mouths of Innocents, lo! here thy might;
 This gem of chastity, this emerald,
 And eke of martyrdom this ruby bright,
 There, where with mangled throat he lay upright,
 The *Alma Redemptoris* 'gan to sing
 So loud, that with his voice the place did ring.

XXIV.

The Christian folk that through the Jewry went
 Come to the spot in wonder at the thing;
 And hastily they for the Provost sent;
 Immediately he came, not tarrying,
 And praiseth Christ that is our heavenly King,
 And eke his Mother, honour of Mankind:
 Which done, he bade that they the Jews should bind.

XXV.

This Child with piteous lamentation then
 Was taken up, singing his song alway;
 And with procession great and pomp of men
 To the next Abbey him they bare away;
 His Mother swooning by the body lay:
 And scarcely could the people that were near
 Remove this second Rachel from the bier.

XXVI.

Torment and shameful death to every one
 This Provost doth for those bad Jews prepare
 That of this murder wist, and that anon:
 Such wickedness his judgments cannot spare;
 Who will do evil, evil shall he bear;
 Them therefore with wild horses did he draw,
 And after that he hung them by the law.

XXVII.

Upon his bier this Innocent doth lie
 Before the altar while the Mass doth last:
 The Abbot with his convent's company
 Then sped themselves to bury him full fast;
 And, when they holy water on him cast,
 Yet spake this Child when sprinkled was the water
 And sang, O *Alma Redemptoris Mater*!

XXVIII.

This Abbot, for he was a holy man,
 As all Monks are, or surely ought to be,
 In supplication to the Child began
 Thus saying, 'O dear Child! I summon thee
 In virtue of the holy Trinity
 Tell me the cause why thou dost sing this hymn,
 Since that thy throat is cut, as it doth seem.'

XXIX.

'My throat is cut unto the bone, I trow,'
 Said this young Child, 'and by the law of kind
 I should have died, yea many hours ago;
 But Jesus Christ, as in the books ye find,
 Will that his glory last, and be in mind;
 And, for the worship of his Mother dear,
 Yet may I sing, O *Alma*! loud and clear.

XXX.

'This well of mercy, Jesu's Mother sweet,
 After my knowledge I have loved alway;
 And in the hour when I my death did meet
 To me she came, and thus to me did say,
 "Thou in thy dying sing this holy lay,"
 As ye have heard; and soon as I had sung
 Methought she laid a grain upon my tongue.

XXXI.

'Wherefore I sing, nor can from song refrain,
 In honour of that blissful Maiden free,
 Till from my tongue off-taken is the grain;
 And after that thus said she unto me;
 "My little Child, then will I come for thee
 Soon as the grain from off thy tongue they take:
 Be not dismayed, I will not thee forsake!"'

XXXII.

This holy Monk, this Abbot—him mean I,
 Touched then his tongue, and took away the grain
 And he gave up the ghost full peacefully;
 And, when the Abbot had this wonder seen,
 His salt tears trickled down like showers of rain
 And on his face he dropped upon the ground,
 And still he lay as if he had been bound.

XXXIII.

ke the whole Convent on the pavement lay,
 Weeping and praising Jesu's Mother dear;
 And after that they rose, and took their way,
 And lifted up this Martyr from the bier,
 And in a tomb of precious marble clear
 Enclosed his uncorrupted body sweet.—
 Where'er he be, God grant us him to meet!

XXXIV.

Young Hew of Lincoln! in like sort laid low
 By cursed Jews—thing well and widely known,
 For it was done a little while ago—
 Pray also thou for us, while here we tarry
 Of weak sinful folk, that God, with pitying eye,
 His mercy would his mercy multiply
 In us, for reverence of his Mother Mary!"

II.

THE CUCKOO AND THE NIGHTINGALE.

I.

O God of Love—*ah, benedicite!*
 How mighty and how great a Lord is he!
 For he of low hearts can make high, of high
 He can make low, and unto death bring nigh;
 And hard hearts he can make them kind and free.

II

Within a little time, as hath been found,
 He can make sick folk whole and fresh and sound:
 Them who are whole in body and in mind,
 He can make sick,—bind can he and unbind
 And that he will have bound, or have unbound.

III.

To tell his might my wit may not suffice;
 To polish men he can make them out of wise;—
 For he may do all that he will devise;
 Whose livers he can make abate their vice,
 And proud hearts can make tremble in a trice.

IV.

In brief, the whole of what he will, he may;
 Against him dare not any wight say nay;
 To humble or afflict whome'er he will,
 To gladden or to grieve, he hath like skill;
 At most his might he sheds on the eve of May.

V.

For every true heart, gentle heart and free,
 That with him is, or thinketh so to be,
 Now against May shall have some stirring—whether
 To joy, or be it to some mourning; never
 At other time, methinks, in like degree.

VI.

For now when they may hear the small birds' song,
 And see the budding leaves the branches throng,
 This unto their remembrance doth bring
 All kinds of pleasure mix'd with sorrowing;
 And longing of sweet thoughts that ever long.

VII.

And of that longing heaviness doth come,
 Whence oft great sickness grows of heart and home;
 Sick are they all for lack of their desire;
 And thus in May their hearts are set on fire,
 So that they burn forth in great martyrdom.

VIII.

In sooth, I speak from feeling, what though now
 Old am I, and to genial pleasure slow;
 Yet have I felt of sickness through the May,
 Both hot and cold, and heart-aches every day,—
 How hard, alas! to bear, I only know.

IX.

Such shaking doth the fever in me keep
 Through all this May that I have little sleep;
 And also 'tis not likely unto me,
 That any living heart should sleepily be
 In which Love's dart its fiery point doth steep.

X.

But tossing lately on a sleepless bed,
 I of a token thought which Lovers heed;
 How among them it was a common tale,
 That it was good to hear the Nightingale,
 Ere the vile Cuckoo's note be uttered.

XI.

And then I thought anon as it was day,
 I gladly would go somewhere to essay
 If I perchance a Nightingale might hear,
 For yet had I heard none, of all that year,
 And it was then the third night of the May.

XII.

And soon as I a glimpse of day espied,
 No longer would I in my bed abide,
 But straightway to a wood that was hard by,
 Forth did I go, alone and fearlessly,
 And held the pathway down by a brook-side;

XIII.

Till to a lawn I came all white and green,
I in so fair a one had never been.
The ground was green, with daisy powdered over;
Tall were the flowers, the grove a lofty cover,
All green and white; and nothing else was seen.

XIV.

There sate I down among the fair fresh flowers,
And saw the birds come tripping from their bowers,
Where they had rested them all night; and they,
Who were so joyful at the light of day,
Began to honour May with all their powers.

XV.

Well did they know that service all by rote,
And there was many and many a lovely note,
Some, singing loud, as if they had complained;
Some with their notes another manner feigned;
And some did sing all out with the full throat.

XVI.

They pruned themselves, and made themselves right
Dancing and leaping light upon the spray; [gay,
And ever two and two together were,
The same as they had chosen for the year,
Upon Saint Valentine's returning day.

XVII.

Meanwhile the stream, whose bank I sate upon,
Was making such a noise as it ran on
Accordant to the sweet Birds' harmony;
Methought that it was the best melody
Which ever to man's ear a passage won.

XVIII.

And for delight, but how I never wot,
I in a slumber and a swoon was caught,
Not all asleep and yet not waking wholly;
And as I lay, the Cuckoo, bird unholy,
Broke silence, or I heard him in my thought.

XIX.

And that was right upon a tree fast by,
And who was then ill satisfied but I?
Now, God, quoth I, that died upon the rood,
From thee and thy base throat, keep all that's good,
Full little joy have I now of thy cry.

XX.

And, as I with the Cuckoo thus 'gan chide,
In the next bush that was me fast beside,
I heard the lusty Nightingale so sing,
That her clear voice made a loud rioting,
Echoing thorough all the green wood wide.

XXI.

Ah! good sweet Nightingale! for my heart's cheer
Hence hast thou stay'd a little while too long;
For we have had the sorry Cuckoo here,
And she hath been before thee with her song;
Evil light on her! she hath done me wrong.

XXII.

But hear you now a wondrous thing, I pray;
As long as in that swooning-fit I lay,
Methought I wist right well what these birds meant
And had good knowing both of their intent,
And of their speech, and all that they would say.

XXIII.

The Nightingale thus in my hearing spake:—
Good Cuckoo, seek some other bush or brake,
And, prithe, let us that can sing dwell here;
For every wight eschews thy song to hear,
Such uncouth singing verily dost thou make.

XXIV.

What! quoth she then, what is 't that ails thee now
It seems to me I sing as well as thou;
For mine's a song that is both true and plain,—
Although I cannot quaver so in vain
As thou dost in thy throat, I wot not how.

XXV.

All men may understanding have of me,
But, Nightingale, so may they not of thee;
For thou hast many a foolish and quaint cry:—
Thou say'st OSEE, OSEE, then how may I
Have knowledge, I thee pray, what this may be!

XXVI.

Ah, fool! quoth she, wist thou not what it is!
Oft as I say OSEE, OSEE, I wis,
Then mean I, that I should be wonderous fain
That shamefully they one and all were slain,
Whoever against Love mean aught amiss.

XXVII.

And also would I that they all were dead,
Who do not think in love their life to lead;
For who is loth the God of Love to obey,
Is only fit to die, I dare well say,
And for that cause OSEE I cry; take heed!

XXVIII.

Ay, quoth the Cuckoo, that is a quaint law,
That all must love or die; but I withdraw,
And take my leave of all such company,
For mine intent it neither is to die,
Nor ever while I live Love's yoke to draw.

XXIX.

For lovers of all folk that be alive,
The most disquiet have and least do thrive;
Lost feeling have of sorrow woe and care,
And the least welfare cometh to their share;
What need is there against the truth to strive!

XXX.

What! quoth she, thou art all out of thy mind,
That in thy churlishness a cause canst find
To speak of Love's true Servants in this mood;
For in this world no service is so good
As every wight that gentle is of kind.

XXXI.

For thereof comes all goodness and all worth;
All gentleness and honour thence come forth;
Thence worship comes, content and true heart's
pleasure,
And full-assured trust, joy without measure,
And jollity, fresh cheerfulness, and mirth;

XXXII.

And bounty, lowliness, and courtesy,
And seemliness, and faithful company,
And dread of shame that will not do amiss;
For he that faithfully Love's servant is,
Rather than be disgraced, would chuse to die.

XXXIII.

And that the very truth it is which I
Now say—in such belief I'll live and die;
And Cuckoo, do thou so, by my advice.
Then, quoth she, let me never hope for bliss,
For with that counsel I do e'er comply.

XXXIV.

Good Nightingale! thou speakest wondrous fair,
Yet for all that, the truth is found elsewhere;
For Love in young folk is but rage, I wis;
And Love in old folk a great dotage is;
Who most it useth, him 'twill most impair.

XXXV.

For thereof come all contraries to gladness;
Thence sickness comes, and overwhelming sadness,
Distrust and jealousy, despite, debate,
Dishonour, shame, envy importunate,
Pride, anger, mischief, poverty, and madness.

XXXVI.

Moving is aye an office of despair,
And one thing is therein which is not fair;
For whoso gets of love a little bliss,
Unless it alway stay with him, I wis
He may full soon go with an old man's hair.

XXXVII.

And, therefore, Nightingale! do thou keep nigh,
For trust me well, in spite of thy quaint cry,
If long time from thy mate thou be, or far,
Thou 'lt be as others that forsaken are;
Then shalt thou raise a clamour as do I.

XXXVIII.

Fie, quoth she, on thy name, Bird ill beseen!
The God of Love afflict thee with all teen,
For thou art worse than mad a thousand fold;
For many a one hath virtues manifold,
Who had been nought, if Love had never been.

XXXIX.

For evermore his servants Love amendeth,
And he from every blemish them defendeth;
And maketh them to burn, as in a fire,
In loyalty, and worshipful desire,
And, when it likes him, joy enough them sendeth.

XL.

Thou Nightingale! the Cuckoo said, be still,
For Love no reason hath but his own will;—
For to th' untrue he oft gives ease and joy;
True lovers doth so bitterly annoy,
He lets them perish through that grievous ill.

XLI.

With such a master would I never be *;
For he, in sooth, is blind, and may not see,
And knows not when he hurts and when he heals;
Within this court full seldom Truth avails,
So diverse in his wilfulness is he

XLII.

Then of the Nightingale did I take note,
How from her inmost heart a sigh she brought,
And said, Alas! that ever I was born,
Not one word have I now, I am so forlorn,—
And with that word, she into tears burst out.

XLIII.

Alas, alas! my very heart will break,
Quoth she, to hear this churlish bird thus speak
Of Love, and of his holy services;
Now, God of Love! thou help me in some wise,
That vengeance on this Cuckoo I may wreak.

XLIV.

And so methought I started up anon,
And to the brook I ran and got a stone,
Which at the Cuckoo hardily I cast,
And he for dread did fly away full fast;
And glad, in sooth, was I when he was gone.

* From a manuscript in the Bodleian, as are also stanzas 44 and 45, which are necessary to complete the sense.

XLV.

And as he flew, the Cuckoo, ever and aye,
Kept crying, "Farewell!—farewell, Popinjay!"
As if in scornful mockery of me;
And on I hunted him from tree to tree,
Till he was far, all out of sight, away.

XLVI.

Then straightway came the Nightingale to me,
And said, Forsooth, my friend, do I thank thee,
That thou wert near to rescue me; and now,
Unto the God of Love I make a vow,
That all this May I will thy songstress be.

XLVII.

Well satisfied, I thanked her, and she said,
By this mishap no longer be dismayed,
Though thou the Cuckoo heard, ere thou heard'st me;
Yet if I live it shall amended be,
When next May comes, if I am not afraid.

XLVIII.

And one thing will I counsel thee also,
The Cuckoo trust not thou, nor his Love's saw;
All that she said is an outrageous lie.
Nay, nothing shall me bring thereto, quoth I,
For Love, and it hath done me mighty woe.

XLIX.

Yea, hath it? use, quoth she, this medicine;
This May-time, every day before thou dine,
Go look on the fresh daisy; then say I,
Although for pain thou may'st be like to die,
Thou wilt be eased, and less wilt droop and pine.

L.

And mind always that thou be good and true,
And I will sing one song, of many new,
For love of thee, as loud as I may cry;
And then did she begin this song full high,
'Beshrew all them that are in love untrue.'

LI.

And soon as she had sung it to the end,
Now farewell, quoth she, for I hence must wend;
And, God of Love, that can right well and may,
Send unto thee as mickle joy this day,
As ever he to Lover yet did send.

LII.

Thus takes the Nightingale her leave of me;
I pray to God with her always to be,
And joy of love to send her evermore;
And shield us from the Cuckoo and her lore,
For there is not so false a bird as she.

LIII.

Forth then she flew, the gentle Nightingale,
To all the Birds that lodged within that dale,
And gathered each and all into one place;
And them besought to hear her doleful case,
And thus it was that she began her tale.

LIV.

The Cuckoo—'tis not well that I should hide
How she and I did each the other chide,
And without ceasing, since it was daylight;
And now I pray you all to do me right
Of that false Bird whom Love can not abide.

LV.

Then spake one Bird, and full assent all gave;
This matter asketh counsel good as grave,
For birds we are—all here together brought;
And, in good sooth, the Cuckoo here is not;
And therefore we a Parliament will have.

LVI.

And thereat shall the Eagle be our Lord,
And other Peers whose names are on record;
A summons to the Cuckoo shall be sent,
And judgment there be given; or that intent
Failing, we finally shall make accord.

LVII.

And all this shall be done, without a nay,
The morrow after Saint Valentine's day,
Under a maple that is well beseen,
Before the chamber-window of the Queen,
At Woodstock, on the meadow green and gay.

LVIII.

She thanked them; and then her leave she took,
And flew into a hawthorn by that brook;
And there she sate and sung—upon that tree—
"For term of life Love shall have hold of me"—
So loudly, that I with that song awoke.

Unlearned Book and rude, as well I know,
For beauty thou hast none, nor eloquence,
Who did on thee the hardness bestow
To appear before my Lady? but a sense
Thou surely hast of her benevolence,
Whereof her hourly bearing proof doth give;
For of all good she is the best alive.

Alas, poor Book! for thy unworthiness,
To show to her some pleasant meanings writ
In winning words, since through her gentleness,
Thee she accepts as for her service fit!
Oh! it repents me I have neither wit
Nor leisure unto thee more worth to give;
For of all good she is the best alive,

speech her meekly with all lowliness,
 though I be far from her I reverence,
 to think upon my truth and stedfastness,
 and to abridge my sorrow's violence,
 caused by the wish, as knows your sapience,
 of her liking proof to me would give;
 or of all good she is the best alive.

L'ENVOY.

asure's Aurora, Day of gladsoomeness!
 ana by night, with heavenly influence
 unmined! root of beauty and goodnesse,
 rite, and allay, by your beneficence,
 y sighs breathed forth in silence,—comfort give!
 ace of all good, you are the best alive.

EXPLICIT.

III.

TROILUS AND CRESIDA.

ext morning Troilus began to clear
 his eyes from sleep, at the first break of day,
 and unto Pandarus, his own Brother dear,
 for love of God, full piteously did say,
 he must the Palace see of Cresida;
 for since we yet may have no other feast,
 let us behold her Palace at the least!

and therewithal to cover his intent
 because he found into the Town to go,
 and they right forth to Cresid's Palace went;
 at, Lord, this simple Troilus was woe,
 for though this sorrowful heart would break in two;
 for when he saw her doors fast bolted all,
 he all night for sorrow down he 'gan to fall.

erewith when this true Lover 'gan behold,
 how shut was every window of the place,
 like frost he thought his heart was icy cold;
 for which, with changèd, pale, and deadly face,
 without word uttered, forth he 'gan to pace;
 and on his purpose bent so fast to ride,
 that no wight his continuance espied.

then said he thus,—O Palace desolate!
 house of houses, once so richly dight!
 Palace empty and disconsolate!
 you lamp of which extinguished is the light;
 Palace whilom day that now art night,
 you ought'st to fall and I to die; since she
 is gone who held us both in sovereignty.

O, of all houses once the crownèd boast!
 Palace illumined with the sun of bliss;
 O ring of which the ruby now is lost,
 O cause of woe, that cause has been of bliss:
 Yet, since I may no better, would I kiss
 Thy cold doors; but I dare not for this rout;
 Farewell, thou shrine of which the Saint is out!

Therewith he cast on Pandarus an eye,
 With changèd face, and piteous to behold;
 And when he might his time aright espy,
 Aye as he rode, to Pandarus he told
 Both his new sorrow and his joys of old,
 So piteously, and with so dead a hue,
 That every wight might on his sorrow rue.

Forth from the spot he rideth up and down,
 And everything to his remembrance
 Came as he rode by places of the town
 Where he had felt such perfect pleasure once
 Lo, yonder saw I mine own Lady dance,
 And in that Temple she with her bright eyes,
 My Lady dear, first bound me captive-wise.

And yonder with joy-smitten heart have I
 Heard my own Cresid's laugh; and once at play
 I yonder saw her eke full blissfully;
 And yonder once she unto me 'gan say—
 Now, my sweet Troilus, love me well, I pray!
 And there so graciously did me behold,
 That hers unto the death my heart I hold.

And at the corner of that self-same house
 Heard I my most beloved Lady dear,
 So womanly, with voice melodious
 Singing so well, so goodly, and so clear,
 That in my soul methinks I yet do hear
 The blissful sound; and in that very place
 My Lady first me took unto her grace.

O blissful God of Love! then thus he cried,
 When I the process have in memory,
 How thou hast wearied me on every side,
 Men thence a book might make, a history;
 What need to seek a conquest over me,
 Since I am wholly at thy will? what joy
 Hast thou thy own liege subjects to destroy?

Dread Lord! so fearful when provoked, thine ire
 Well hast thou wreaked on me by pain and grief;
 Now mercy, Lord! thou know'st well I desire
 Thy grace above all pleasures first and chief;
 And live and die I will in thy belief;
 For which I ask for guerdon but one boon,
 That Cresida again thou send me soon.

Constrain her heart as quickly to return,
 As thou dost mine with longing her to see,
 Then know I well that she would not sojourn.
 Now, blissful Lord, so cruel do not be
 Unto the blood of Troy, I pray of thee,
 As Juno was unto the Theban blood,
 From whence to Thebes came griefs in multitude.

And after this he to the gate did go
 Whence Cresid rode, as if in haste she was ;
 And up and down there went, and to and fro,
 And to himself full oft he said, alas !
 From hence my hope, and solace forth did pass.
 O would the blissful God now for his joy,
 I might her see again coming to Troy !

And up to yonder hill was I her guide ;
 Alas, and there I took of her my leave ;
 Yonder I saw her to her Father ride,
 For very grief of which my heart shall cleave ;—
 And hither home I came when it was eve ;
 And here I dwell an outcast from all joy,
 And shall, unless I see her soon in Troy.

And of himself did he imagine oft,
 That he was blighted, pale, and waxen less
 Than he was wont ; and that in whispers soft
 Men said, what may it be, can no one guess
 Why Troilus hath all this heaviness ?
 All which he of himself conceited wholly
 Out of his weakness and his melancholy.

Another time he took into his head,
 That every wight, who in the way passed by,
 Had of him ruth, and fancied that they said,
 I am right sorry Troilus will die :
 And thus a day or two drove wearily ;
 As ye have heard ; such life 'gan he to lead
 As one that standeth betwixt hope and dread.

For which it pleased him in his songs to show
 The occasion of his woe, as best he might ;
 And made a fitting song, of words but few,
 Somewhat his woeful heart to make more light ;
 And when he was removed from all men's sight,
 With a soft night voice, he of his Lady dear,
 That absent was, 'gan sing as ye may hear.

O star, of which I lost have all the light,
 With a sore heart well ought I to bewail,
 That ever dark in torment, night by night,
 Toward my death with wind I steer and sail ;

For which upon the tenth night if thou fail
 With thy bright beams to guide me but one hour
 My ship and me Charybdis will devour.

As soon as he this song had thus sung through,
 He fell again into his sorrows old ;
 And every night, as was his wont to do,
 Troilus stood the bright moon to behold ;
 And all his trouble to the moon he told,
 And said ; I wis, when thou art horn'd anew,
 I shall be glad if all the world be true.

Thy horns were old as now upon that morrow,
 When hence did journey my bright Lady dear,
 That cause is of my torment and my sorrow ;
 For which, oh, gentle Luna, bright and clear,
 For love of God, run fast above thy sphere ;
 For when thy horns begin once more to spring,
 Then shall she come, that with her bliss may bring

The day is more, and longer every night
 Than they were wont to be—for he thought so ;
 And that the sun did take his course not right,
 By longer way than he was wont to go ;
 And said, I am in constant dread I trow,
 That Phæton his son is yet alive,
 His too fond father's car amiss to drive.

Upon the walls fast also would he walk,
 To the end that he the Grecian host might see ;
 And ever thus he to himself would talk :—
 Lo ! yonder is my own bright Lady free ;
 Or yonder is it that the tents must be ;
 And thence does come this air which is so sweet,
 That in my soul I feel the joy of it.

And certainly this wind, that more and more
 By moments thus increaseth in my face,
 Is of my Lady's sighs heavy and sore ;
 I prove it thus ; for in no other space
 Of all this town, save only in this place,
 Feel I a wind, that soundeth so like pain ;
 It saith, Alas, why severed are we twain !

A weary while in pain he tosseth thus,
 Till fully past and gone was the ninth night ;
 And ever at his side stood Pandarus,
 Who busily made use of all his might
 To comfort him, and make his heart more light ;
 Giving him always hope, that she the morrow
 Of the tenth day will come, and end his sorrow.

POEMS REFERRING TO THE PERIOD OF OLD AGE.

I.

THE OLD CUMBERLAND BEGGAR.

A class of Beggars, to which the Old Man here described belongs, will probably soon be extinct. It consisted of poor, and, mostly, old and infirm persons, who confined themselves to a stated round in their neighbourhood, and had certain fixed days, on which, at different houses, they regularly received alms, sometimes in money, but mostly in provisions.

SAW an aged Beggar in my walk ;
 And he was seated, by the highway side,
 In a low structure of rude masonry
 Built at the foot of a huge hill, that they
 Might lead their horses down the steep rough road
 And thence remount at ease. The aged Man
 Had placed his staff across the broad smooth stone
 That overlays the pile ; and, from a bag
 Drawn white with flour, the dole of village dames,
 Drew his scraps and fragments, one by one ;
 And scanned them with a fixed and serious look
 Of idle computation. In the sun,
 On the second step of that small pile,
 Surrounded by those wild unpeopled hills,
 He sat, and ate his food in solitude :
 And ever, scattered from his palsied hand,
 That, still attempting to prevent the waste,
 Was baffled still, the crumbs in little showers
 Fell on the ground ; and the small mountain birds,
 Not venturing yet to peck their destined meal,
 Approached within the length of half his staff.

From my childhood have I known ; and then
 He was so old, he seems not older now ;
 He travels on, a solitary Man,
 Helpless in appearance, that for him
 The sauntering Horseman throws not with a slack
 His careless hand his alms upon the ground,
 He stops,—that he may safely lodge the coin
 Within the old Man's hat ; nor quits him so,
 Still, when he has given his horse the rein,
 Watches the aged Beggar with a look
 Along, and half-reverted. She who tends
 The toll-gate, when in summer at her door
 She turns her wheel, if on the road she sees
 The aged beggar coming, quits her work,
 And lifts the latch for him that he may pass.

The post-boy, when his rattling wheels o'ertake
 The aged Beggar in the woody lane,
 Shouts to him from behind ; and, if thus warned
 The old man does not change his course, the boy
 Turns with less noisy wheels to the roadside,
 And passes gently by, without a curse
 Upon his lips, or anger at his heart.

He travels on, a solitary Man ;
 His age has no companion. On the ground
 His eyes are turned, and, as he moves along,
 They move along the ground ; and, evermore,
 Instead of common and habitual sight
 Of fields with rural works, of hill and dale,
 And the blue sky, one little span of earth
 Is all his prospect. Thus, from day to day,
 Bow-bent, his eyes for ever on the ground,
 He plies his weary journey ; seeing still,
 And seldom knowing that he sees, some straw,
 Some scattered leaf, or marks which, in one track,
 The nails of cart or chariot-wheel have left
 Impressed on the white road,—in the same line,
 At distance still the same. Poor Traveller !
 His staff trails with him ; scarcely do his feet
 Disturb the summer dust ; he is so still
 In look and motion, that the cottage curs,
 Ere he has passed the door, will turn away,
 Weary of barking at him. Boys and girls,
 The vacant and the busy, maids and youths,
 And urchins newly breeched—all pass him by :
 Him even the slow-paced waggon leaves behind.

But deem not this Man useless.—Statesmen ! ye
 Who are so restless in your wisdom, ye
 Who have a broom still ready in your hands
 To rid the world of nuisances ; ye proud,
 Heart-swollen, while in your pride ye contemplate
 Your talents, power, or wisdom, deem him not
 A burthen of the earth ! 'Tis Nature's law
 That none, the meanest of created things,
 Of forms created the most vile and brute,
 The dullest or most noxious, should exist
 Divorced from good—a spirit and pulse of good,
 A life and soul, to every mode of being
 Inseparably linked. Then be assured

That least of all can ought—that ever owned
 The heaven-regarding eye and front sublime
 Which man is born to—sink, howe'er depressed,
 So low as to be scorned without a sin;
 Without offence to God cast out of view;
 Like the dry remnant of a garden-flower
 Whose seeds are shed, or as an implement
 Worn out and worthless. While from door to door,
 This old Man creeps, the villagers in him
 Behold a record which together binds
 Past deeds and offices of charity,
 Else unremembered, and so keeps alive
 The kindly mood in hearts which lapse of years,
 And that half-wisdom half-experience gives,
 Make slow to feel, and by sure steps resign
 To selfishness and cold oblivious cares.
 Among the farms and solitary huts,
 Hamlets and thinly-scattered villages,
 Where'er the aged Beggar takes his rounds,
 The mild necessity of use compels
 To acts of love; and habit does the work
 Of reason; yet prepares that after-joy
 Which reason cherishes. And thus the soul,
 By that sweet taste of pleasure unpursued,
 Doth find herself insensibly disposed
 To virtue and true goodness.

Some there are,

By their good works exalted, lofty minds
 And meditative, authors of delight
 And happiness, which to the end of time
 Will live, and spread, and kindle: even such minds
 In childhood, from this solitary Being,
 Or from like wanderer, haply have received
 (A thing more precious far than all that books
 Or the solicitudes of love can do!)

That first mild touch of sympathy and thought,
 In which they found their kindred with a world
 Where want and sorrow were. The easy man
 Who sits at his own door,—and, like the pear
 That overhangs his head from the green wall,
 Feeds in the sunshine; the robust and young,
 The prosperous and unthinking, they who live
 Sheltered, and flourish in a little grove
 Of their own kindred;—all behold in him
 A silent monitor, which on their minds
 Must needs impress a transitory thought
 Of self-congratulation, to the heart
 Of each recalling his peculiar boons,
 His charters and exemptions; and, perchance,
 Though he to no one give the fortitude
 And circumspection needful to preserve
 His present blessings, and to husband up
 The respite of the season, he, at least,
 And 'tis no vulgar service, makes them felt.

Yet further. —Many, I believe, there are
 Who live a life of virtuous decency,
 Men who can hear the Decalogue and feel
 No self-reproach; who of the moral law
 Established in the land where they abide
 Are strict observers; and not negligent
 In acts of love to those with whom they dwell,
 Their kindred, and the children of their blood,
 Praise be to such, and to their slumbers peace!
 —But of the poor man ask, the abject poor;
 Go, and demand of him, if there be here
 In this cold abstinence from evil deeds,
 And these inevitable charities,
 Wherewith to satisfy the human soul?
 No—man is dear to man; the poorest poor
 Long for some moments in a weary life
 When they can know and feel that they have been
 Themselves, the fathers and the dealers-out
 Of some small blessings; have been kind to such
 As needed kindness, for this single cause,
 That we have all of us one human heart.
 —Such pleasure is to one kind Being known,
 My neighbour, when with punctual care, each week
 Duly as Friday comes, though pressed herself
 By her own wants, she from her store of meal
 Takes one unsparing handful for the scrip
 Of this old Mendicant, and, from her door
 Returning with exhilarated heart,
 Sits by her fire, and builds her hope in heaven.

Then let him pass, a blessing on his head!
 And while in that vast solitude to which
 The tide of things has borne him, he appears
 To breathe and live but for himself alone,
 Unblamed, uninjured, let him bear about
 The good which the benignant law of Heaven
 Has hung around him: and, while life is his,
 Still let him prompt the unlettered villagers
 To tender offices and pensive thoughts.
 —Then let him pass, a blessing on his head!
 And, long as he can wander, let him breathe
 The freshness of the valleys; let his blood
 Struggle with frosty air and winter snows;
 And let the chartered wind that sweeps the heath
 Beat his grey locks against his withered face.
 Reverence the hope whose vital anxiousness
 Gives the last human interest to his heart.
 May never HOUSE, misnamed of INDUSTRY,
 Make him a captive!—for that pent-up din,
 Those life-consuming sounds that clog the air,
 Be his the natural silence of old age!
 Let him be free of mountain solitudes;
 And have around him, whether heard or not,
 The pleasant melody of woodland birds.

Now are his pleasures : if his eyes have now
 Then doomed so long to settle upon earth
 That not without some effort they behold
 The countenance of the horizontal sun,
 Rising or setting, let the light at least
 Find a free entrance to their languid orbs.
 And let him, *where* and *when* he will, sit down
 Beneath the trees, or on a grassy bank
 Highway side, and with the little birds
 Share his chance-gathered meal ; and, finally,
 As in the eye of Nature he has lived,
 So in the eye of Nature let him die !

1798.

II.

THE FARMER OF TILSBURY VALE.

That not for the unfeeling, the falsely refined,
 That squeamish in taste, and the narrow of mind,
 As the small critic wielding his delicate pen,
 That I sing of old Adam, the pride of old men.

He dwells in the centre of London's wide Town ;
 His staff is a sceptre—his grey hairs a crown ;
 As his bright eyes look brighter, set off by the
 streak
 One unfaded rose that still blooms on his cheek.

'Tis the dews, in the sunshine of morn,—'mid the
 joy
 One the fields, he collected that bloom, when a boy ;
 The countenance there fashioned, which, spite of
 a stain
 'Tis his life hath received, to the last will remain.

As farmer he was ; and his house far and near
 Was the boast of the country for excellent cheer :
 'Tis oft have I heard in sweet Tilsbury Vale
 One the silver-rimmed horn whence he dealt his
 mild ale !

As Adam was far as the farthest from ruin,
 His fields seemed to know what their Master was
 doing ;
 As turnips, and corn-land, and meadow, and lea,
 As taught the infection—as generous as he.

As Adam prized little the feast and the bowl,—
 His fields better suited the ease of his soul :
 He strayed through the fields like an indolent wight,
 The quiet of nature was Adam's delight.

For Adam was simple in thought ; and the poor,
 Familiar with him, made an inn of his door :
 He gave them the best that he had ; or, to say
 What less may mislead you, they took it away.

Thus thirty smooth years did he thrive on his farm :
 The Genius of plenty preserved him from harm :
 At length, what to most is a season of sorrow,
 His means are run out,—he must beg, or must
 borrow.

To the neighbours he went,—all were free with
 their money ;
 For his hive had so long been replenished with
 honey,
 That they dreamt not of dearth ;—He continued
 his rounds,
 Knocked here—and knocked there, pounds still
 adding to pounds.

He paid what he could with his ill-gotten pelf,
 And something, it might be, reserved for himself :
 Then (what is too true) without hinting a word,
 Turned his back on the country—and off like a bird.

You lift up your eyes!—but I guess that you frame
 A judgment too harsh of the sin and the shame ;
 In him it was scarcely a business of art,
 For this he did all in the *ease* of his heart.

To London—a sad emigration I ween—
 With his grey hairs he went from the brook and
 the green ;
 And there, with small wealth but his legs and his
 hands,
 As lonely he stood as a crow on the sands.

All trades, as need was, did old Adam assume,—
 Served as stable-boy, errand-boy, porter, and groom ;
 But nature is gracious, necessity kind,
 And, in spite of the shame that may lurk in his
 mind,

He seems ten birthdays younger, is green and is
 stout ;
 Twice as fast as before does his blood run about ;
 You would say that each hair of his beard was alive,
 And his fingers are busy as bees in a hive.

For he's not like an Old Man that leisurely goes
 About work that he knows, in a track that he knows ;
 But often his mind is compelled to demur,
 And you guess that the more then his body must stir.

In the throng of the town like a stranger is he,
Like one whose own country's far over the sea;
And Nature, while through the great city he hies,
Full ten times a day takes his heart by surprise.

This gives him the fancy of one that is young,
More of soul in his face than of words on his tongue;
Like a maiden of twenty he trembles and sighs,
And tears of fifteen will come into his eyes.

What's a tempest to him, or the dry parching heats?
Yet he watches the clouds that pass over the streets;
With a look of such earnestness often will stand,
You might think he'd twelve reapers at work in the Strand.

Where proud Covent-garden, in desolate hours
Of snow and hoar-frost, spreads her fruits and her flowers,
Old Adam will smile at the pains that have made
Poor winter look fine in such strange masquerade.

'Mid coaches and chariots, a waggon of straw,
Like a magnet, the heart of old Adam can draw;
With a thousand soft pictures his memory will teem,
And his hearing is touched with the sounds of a dream.

Up the Haymarket hill he oft whistles his way,
Thrusts his hands in a waggon, and smells at the hay;
He thinks of the fields he so often hath mown,
And is happy as if the rich freight were his own.

But chiefly to Smithfield he loves to repair,—
If you pass by at morning, you 'll meet with him there.

The breath of the cows you may see him inhale,
And his heart all the while is in Tilsbury Vale.

Now farewell, old Adam! when low thou art laid,
May one blade of grass spring up over thy head;
And I hope that thy grave, wheresoever it be,
Will hear the wind sigh through the leaves of a tree.

1803.

III.

THE SMALL CELANDINE.

THERE is a Flower, the lesser Celandine,
That shrinks, like many more, from cold and rain;
And, the first moment that the sun may shine,
Bright as the sun himself, 'tis out again!

When hailstones have been falling, swarm
swarm,
Or blasts the green field and the trees distrest,
Oft have I seen it muffled up from harm,
In close self-shelter, like a Thing at rest.

But lately, one rough day, this Flower I passed
And recognised it, though an altered form,
Now standing forth an offering to the blast,
And buffeted at will by rain and storm.

I stopped, and said with inly-muttered voice,
"It doth not love the shower, nor seek the cold
This neither is its courage nor its choice,
But its necessity in being old.

The sunshine may not cheer it, nor the dew;
It cannot help itself in its decay;
Stiff in its members, withered, changed of hue."
And, in my spleen, I smiled that it was grey.

To be a Prodigal's Favourite—then, worse true
A Miser's Pensioner—behold our lot!
O Man, that from thy fair and shining youth
Age might but take the things Youth needed not.

1800.

IV.

THE TWO THIEVES;
OR,

THE LAST STAGE OF AVARICE.

O now that the genius of Bewick were mine,
And the skill which he learned on the banks of
Tyne,

Then the Muses might deal with me just as I
chose,

For I 'd take my last leave both of verse and
prose.

What feats would I work with my magical hand
Book-learning and books should be banished
land:

And, for hunger and thirst and such troubles
calls,

Every ale-house should then have a feast on
walls.

The traveller would hang his wet clothes on a chair
Let them smoke, let them burn, not a straw would
he care!

For the Prodigal Son, Joseph's Dream and
sheaves,
Oh, what would they be to my tale of two Thieves!

One, yet unbreeched, is not three birthdays old,
 His Grandsire that age more than thirty times told ;
 There are ninety good seasons of fair and foul
 weather
 Between them, and both go a-pilfering together.

With chips is the carpenter strewing his floor ?
 A cart-load of turf at an old woman's door ?
 O Daniel his hand to the treasure will slide !
 And his Grandson's as busy at work by his side.

O Daniel begins ; he stops short—and his eye,
 Through the lost look of dotage, is cunning and sly :
 'Tis a look which at this time is hardly his own,
 It tells a plain tale of the days that are flown.

Once had a heart which was moved by the wires
 Of manifold pleasures and many desires :
 Al what if he cherished his purse ? 'Twas no
 more

On treading a path trod by thousands before.

'Twas a path trod by thousands ; but Daniel is one
 Who went something farther than others have gone,
 Al now with old Daniel you see how it fares ;
 You see to what end he has brought his grey hairs.

The pair sally forth hand in hand : ere the sun
 Has peered o'er the beeches, their work is begun :
 Al yet, into whatever sin they may fall,
 The child but half knows it, and that not at all.

They hunt through the streets with deliberate tread,
 Al each, in his turn, becomes leader or led ;
 Al, wherever they carry their plots and their
 wiles,

Every face in the village is dimpled with smiles.

Neither checked by the rich nor the needy they
 roam ;

For the grey-headed Sire has a daughter at home,
 Who will gladly repair all the damage that's done ;
 And three, were it asked, would be rendered for one.

Old Man ! whom so oft I with pity have eyed,
 I love thee, and love the sweet Boy at thy side :
 Long yet may'st thou live ! for a teacher we see
 That lifts up the veil of our nature in thee.

1800.

V.

ANIMAL TRANQUILLITY AND DECAY.

THE little hedgerow birds,
 That peck along the road, regard him not.
 He travels on, and in his face, his step,
 His gait, is one expression : every limb,
 His look and bending figure, all bespeak
 A man who does not move with pain, but moves
 With thought.—He is insensibly subdued
 To settled quiet : he is one by whom
 All effort seems forgotten ; one to whom
 Long patience hath such mild composure given,
 That patience now doth seem a thing of which
 He hath no need. He is by nature led
 To peace so perfect that the young behold
 With envy, what the Old Man hardly feels.

1798.

EPITAPHS AND ELEGIAC PIECES.

EPITAPHS

TRANSLATED FROM CHIABRERA.

I.

WEEP not, beloved Friends! nor let the air
 For me with sighs be troubled. Not from life
 Have I been taken; this is genuine life
 And this alone—the life which now I live
 In peace eternal; where desire and joy
 Together move in fellowship without end.—
 Francesco Ceni willed that, after death,
 His tombstone thus should speak for him. And
 surely

Small cause there is for that fond wish of ours
 Long to continue in this world; a world
 That keeps not faith, nor yet can point a hope
 To good, whereof itself is destitute.

II.

PERHAPS some needful service of the State
 Drew TITUS from the depth of studious bowers,
 And doomed him to contend in faithless courts,
 Where gold determines between right and wrong.
 Yet did at length his loyalty of heart,
 And his pure native genius, lead him back
 To wait upon the bright and gracious Muses,
 Whom he had early loved. And not in vain
 Such course he held! Bologna's learned schools
 Were gladdened by the Sage's voice, and hung
 With fondness on those sweet Nestorian strains.
 There pleasure crowned his days; and all his
 thoughts

A roseate fragrance breathed. *—O human life,
 That never art secure from dolorous change!
 Behold a high injunction suddenly
 To Arno's side hath brought him, and he charmed
 A Tuscan audience: but full soon was called
 To the perpetual silence of the grave.
 Mourn, Italy, the loss of him who stood
 A Champion stedfast and invincible,
 To quell the rage of literary War!

* Ivi vivea giocondo e i suoi pensieri
 Erano tutti rose.

The Translator had not skill to come nearer to his original.

III.

O THOU who movest onward with a mind
 Intent upon thy way, pause, though in haste!
 'Twill be no fruitless moment. I was born
 Within Savona's walls, of gentle blood.
 On Tiber's banks my youth was dedicate
 To sacred studies; and the Roman Shepherd
 Gave to my charge Urbino's numerous flock.
 Well did I watch, much laboured, nor had power
 To escape from many and strange indignities;
 Was smitten by the great ones of the world,
 But did not fall; for Virtue braves all shocks,
 Upon herself resting immoveably.
 Me did a kindlier fortune then invite
 To serve the glorious Henry, King of France,
 And in his hands I saw a high reward
 Stretched out for my acceptance,—but Death came
 Now, Reader, learn from this my fate, how false
 How treacherous to her promise, is the world;
 And trust in God—to whose eternal doom
 Must bend the sceptred Potentates of earth.

IV.

THERE never breathed a man who, when his life
 Was closing, might not of that life relate
 Toils long and hard.—The warrior will report
 Of wounds, and bright swords flashing in the field
 And blast of trumpets. He who hath been doomed
 To bow his forehead in the courts of kings,
 Will tell of fraud and never-ceasing hate,
 Envy and heart-inquietude, derived
 From intricate cabals of treacherous friends.
 I, who on shipboard lived from earliest youth,
 Could represent the countenance horrible
 Of the vexed waters, and the indignant rage
 Of Auster and Boötes. Fifty years
 Over the well-steered galleys did I rule:—
 From huge Pelorus to the Atlantic pillars,
 Rises no mountain to mine eyes unknown;
 And the broad gulfs I traversed oft and oft
 Of every cloud which in the heavens might stir
 I knew the force; and hence the rough sea's power
 Availd not to my Vessel's overthrow.
 What noble pomp and frequent have not I

a regal decks beheld ! yet in the end
 earned that one poor moment can suffice
 to equalise the lofty and the low.
 To sail the sea of life—a *Calm* One finds,
 and One a *Tempest*—and, the voyage o'er,
 death is the quiet haven of us all.
 More of my condition ye would know,
 Savona was my birth-place, and I sprang
 from noble parents : seventy years and three
 did I—then yielded to a slow disease.

V.

TRUE is it that Ambrosio Salinero
 with an untoward fate was long involved
 in odious litigation ; and full long,
 the harder still ! had he to endure assaults
 of racking malady. And true it is
 that not the less a frank courageous heart
 and buoyant spirit triumphed over pain ;
 and he was strong to follow in the steps
 of the fair Muses. Not a covert path
 leads to the dear Parnassian forest's shade,
 that might from him be hidden ; not a track
 hunts to pellucid Hippocrene, but he
 had traced its windings.—This Savona knows,
 that no sepulchral honors to her Son
 were paid, for in our age the heart is ruled
 only by gold. And now a simple stone
 described with this memorial here is raised
 to his bereft, his lonely, Chiabrera.
 Think not, O Passenger ! who read'st the lines
 that an exceeding love hath dazzled me ;
 —he was One whose memory ought to spread
 where'er Permessus bears an honoured name,
 and live as long as its pure stream shall flow.

VI.

DESTINED to war from very infancy
 was I, Roberto Dati, and I took
 Malta the white symbol of the Cross :
 for in life's vigorous season did I shun
 hazard or toil ; among the sands was seen
 (Libya ; and not seldom, on the banks
 of wide Hungarian Danube, 'twas my lot
 to hear the sanguinary trumpet sounded.
 Slaved I, and repined not at such fate :
 'tis only grieves me, for it seems a wrong,
 that stripped of arms I to my end am brought
 from the soft down of my paternal home.
 Yehaphly Arno shall be spared all cause
 to blush for me. Thou, loiter not nor halt
 thy appointed way, and bear in mind
 how fleeting and how frail is human life !

VII.

O FLOWER of all that springs from gentle blood,
 And all that generous nurture breeds to make
 Youth amiable ; O friend so true of soul
 To fair Aglaia ; by what envy moved,
 Lelius ! has death cut short thy brilliant day
 In its sweet opening ? and what dire mishap
 Has from Savona torn her best delight ?
 For thee she mourns, nor e'er will cease to mourn ;
 And, should the out-pourings of her eyes suffice not
 For her heart's grief, she will entreat Sebeto
 Not to withhold his bounteous aid, Sebeto
 Who saw thee, on his margin, yield to death,
 In the chaste arms of thy beloved Love !
 What profit riches ? what does youth avail ?
 Dust are our hopes ;—I, weeping bitterly,
 Penned these sad lines, nor can forbear to pray
 That every gentle Spirit hither led
 May read them not without some bitter tears.

VIII.

NOT without heavy grief of heart did He
 On whom the duty fell (for at that time
 The father sojourned in a distant land)
 Deposit in the hollow of this tomb
 A brother's Child, most tenderly beloved !
 FRANCESCO was the name the Youth had borne,
 POZZOBONNELLI his illustrious house ;
 And, when beneath this stone the Corse was laid,
 The eyes of all Savona streamed with tears.
 Alas ! the twentieth April of his life
 Had scarcely flowered : and at this early time,
 By genuine virtue he inspired a hope
 That greatly cheered his country : to his kin
 He promised comfort ; and the flattering thoughts
 His friends had in their fondness entertained,*
 He suffered not to languish or decay.
 Now is there not good reason to break forth
 Into a passionate lament ?—O Soul !
 Short while a Pilgrim in our nether world,
 Do thou enjoy the calm empyreal air ;
 And round this earthly tomb let roses rise,
 An everlasting spring ! in memory
 Of that delightful fragrance which was once
 From thy mild manners quietly exhaled.

* In justice to the Author, I subjoin the original :—
 ————— e degli amici
 Non lasciava languire i bei pensieri.

IX.

PAUSE, courteous Spirit!—Balbi supplicates
That Thou, with no reluctant voice, for him
Here laid in mortal darkness, wouldst prefer
A prayer to the Redeemer of the world.
This to the dead by sacred right belongs ;
All else is nothing.—Did occasion suit
To tell his worth, the marble of this tomb
Would ill suffice : for Plato's lore sublime,
And all the wisdom of the Stagyrice,
Enriched and beautified his studious mind :
With Archimedes also he conversed
As with a chosen friend ; nor did he leave
Those laureat wreaths ungathered which the
Nymphs
Twine near thy loved Permessus.—Finally,
Himself above each lower thought uplifting,
His ears he closed to listen to the songs
Which Sion's Kings did consecrate of old ;
And his Permessus found on Lebanon.
A blessed Man ! who of protracted days
Made not, as thousands do, a vulgar sleep ;
But truly did *He* live his life. Urbino,
Take pride in him !—O Passenger, farewell !

I.

By a blest Husband guided, Mary came
From nearest kindred, Vernon her new name ;
She came, though meek of soul, in seemly pride
Of happiness and hope, a youthful Bride.
O dread reverse ! if aught *be* so, which proves
That God will chasten whom he dearly loves.
Faith bore her up through pains in mercy given,
And troubles that were each a step to Heaven :
Two Babes were laid in earth before she died ;
A third now slumbers at the Mother's side ;
Its Sister-twin survives, whose smiles afford
A trembling solace to her widowed Lord.

Reader ! if to thy bosom cling the pain
Of recent sorrow combated in vain ;
Or if thy cherished grief have failed to thwart
Time still intent on his insidious part,
Lulling the mourner's best good thoughts asleep,
Pilfering regrets we would, but cannot, keep ;
Bear with Him—judge *Him* gently who makes known
His bitter loss by this memorial Stone ;
And pray that in his faithful breast the grace
Of resignation find a hallowed place.

II.

Six months to six years added he remained
Upon this sinful earth, by sin unstained :
O blessed Lord ! whose mercy then removed
A Child whom every eye that looked on loved ;
Support us, teach us calmly to resign
What we possessed, and now is wholly thine !

III.

CENOTAPH.

In affectionate remembrance of Frances Fermor, who
remains are deposited in the church of Claines, near We
cester, this stone is erected by her sister, Dame Margare
wife of Sir George Beaumont, Bart., who, feeling not le
than the love of a brother for the deceased, commens
this memorial to the care of his heirs and successors in th
possession of this place.

By vain affections unenthralled,
Though resolute when duty called
To meet the world's broad eye,
Pure as the holiest cloistered nun
That ever feared the tempting sun,
Did Fermor live and die.

This Tablet, hallowed by her name,
One heart-relieving tear may claim ;
But if the pensive gloom
Of fond regret be still thy choice,
Exalt thy spirit, hear the voice
Of Jesus from her tomb !

‘I AM THE WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE.’

IV.

EPITAPH

IN THE CHAPEL-YARD OF LANGDALE, WESTMORELAND.

By playful smiles, (alas ! too oft
A sad heart's sunshine) by a soft
And gentle nature, and a free
Yet modest hand of charity,
Through life was OWEN LLOYD endeared
To young and old ; and how revered
Had been that pious spirit, a tide
Of humble mourners testified,
When, after pains dispensed to prove
The measure of God's chastening love,

Here, brought from far, his corse found rest,—
Fulfilment of his own request ;—
Urged less for this Yew's shade, though he
Planted with such fond hope the tree ;
Less for the love of stream and rock,
Near as they were, than that his Flock,
When they no more their Pastor's voice
Could hear to guide them in their choice
Through good and evil, help might have,
Demonished, from his silent grave,
Of righteousness, of sins forgiven,
Or peace on earth and bliss in heaven.

V.

ADDRESS TO THE SCHOLARS OF THE
VILLAGE SCHOOL OF—.

1798.

I COME, ye little noisy Crew,
Not long your pastime to prevent ;
I heard the blessing which to you
Our common Friend and Father sent.
I kissed his cheek before he died ;
And when his breath was fled,
I raised, while kneeling by his side,
His hand :—it dropped like lead.
Your hands, dear Little-ones, do all
That can be done, will never fall
Like his till they are dead.
By night or day blow foul or fair,
Ne'er will the best of all your train
Play with the locks of his white hair,
Or stand between his knees again.

Here did he sit confined for hours ;
But he could see the woods and plains,
Could hear the wind and mark the showers
Come streaming down the streaming panes.
Now stretched beneath his grass-green mound
He rests a prisoner of the ground.
He loved the breathing air,
He loved the sun, but if it rise
Or set, to him where now he lies,
Brings not a moment's care.
Alas ! what idle words ; but take
The Dirge which for our Master's sake
And yours, love prompted me to make.
The rhymes so homely in attire
With learned ears may ill agree,
But chanted by your Orphan Quire
Will make a touching melody.

DIRGE.

Mourn, Shepherd, near thy old grey stone ;
Thou Angler, by the silent flood ;
And mourn when thou art all alone,
Thou Woodman, in the distant wood !

Thou one blind Sailor, rich in joy
Though blind, thy tunes in sadness hum ;
And mourn, thou poor half-witted Boy !
Born deaf, and living deaf and dumb.

Thou drooping sick Man, bless the Guide
Who checked or turned thy headstrong youth,
As he before had sanctified
Thy infancy with heavenly truth.

Ye Striplings, light of heart and gay,
Bold settlers on some foreign shore,
Give, when your thoughts are turned this way,
A sigh to him whom we deplore.

For us who here in funeral strain
With one accord our voices raise,
Let sorrow overcharged with pain
Be lost in thankfulness and praise.

And when our hearts shall feel a sting
From ill we meet or good we miss,
May touches of his memory bring
Fond healing, like a mother's kiss.

BY THE SIDE OF THE GRAVE SOME YEARS
AFTER.

LONG time his pulse hath ceased to beat ;
But benefits, his gift, we trace—
Expressed in every eye we meet
Round this dear Vale, his native place.

To stately Hall and Cottage rude
Flowed from his life what still they hold,
Light pleasures, every day, renewed ;
And blessings half a century old.

Oh true of heart, of spirit gay,
Thy faults, where not already gone
From memory, prolong their stay
For charity's sweet sake alone.

Such solace find we for our loss ;
And what beyond this thought we crave
Comes in the promise from the Cross,
Shining upon thy happy grave.*

* See upon the subject of the three foregoing pieces the
Fountain, &c. &c., pages 365, 366.

VI.

ELEGIAC STANZAS,

SUGGESTED BY A PICTURE OF FEELE CASTLE, IN A STORM,
PAINTED BY SIR GEORGE BEAUMONT.

I WAS thy neighbour once, thou rugged Pile !
Four summer weeks I dwelt in sight of thee :
I saw thee every day ; and all the while
Thy Form was sleeping on a glassy sea.

So pure the sky, so quiet was the air !
So like, so very like, was day to day !
Whene'er I looked, thy Image still was there ;
It trembled, but it never passed away.

How perfect was the calm ! it seemed no sleep ;
No mood, which season takes away, or brings :
I could have fancied that the mighty Deep
Was even the gentlest of all gentle Things.

Ah ! THEN, if mine had been the Painter's hand,
To express what then I saw ; and add the gleam,
The light that never was, on sea or land,
The consecration, and the Poet's dream ;

I would have planted thee, thou hoary Pile
Amid a world how different from this !
Beside a sea that could not cease to smile ;
On tranquil land, beneath a sky of bliss.

Thou shouldst have seemed a treasure-house divine
Of peaceful years ; a chronicle of heaven ;—
Of all the sunbeams that did ever shine
The very sweetest had to thee been given.

A Picture had it been of lasting ease,
Elysian quiet, without toil or strife ;
No motion but the moving tide, a breeze,
Or merely silent Nature's breathing life.

Such, in the fond illusion of my heart,
Such Picture would I at that time have made :
And seen the soul of truth in every part,
A steadfast peace that might not be betrayed.

So once it would have been,—'tis so no more ;
I have submitted to a new control :
A power is gone, which nothing can restore ;
A deep distress hath humanised my Soul.

Not for a moment could I now behold
A smiling sea, and be what I have been :
The feeling of my loss will ne'er be old ;
This, which I know, I speak with mind serene.

Then, Beaumont, Friend ! who would have been t
Friend,

If he had lived, of Him whom I deplore,
This work of thine I blame not, but commend ;
This sea in anger, and that dismal shore.

O 'tis a passionate Work !—yet wise and well,
Well chosen is the spirit that is here ;
That Hulk which labours in the deadly swell,
This rueful sky, this pageantry of fear !

And this huge Castle, standing here sublime,
I love to see the look with which it braves,
Cased in the unfeeling armour of old time,
The lightning, the fierce wind, and trampling way

Farewell, farewell the heart that lives alone,
Housed in a dream, at distance from the Kind !
Such happiness, wherever it be known,
Is to be pitied ; for 'tis surely blind.

But welcome fortitude, and patient cheer,
And frequent sights of what is to be borne !
Such sights, or worse, as are before me here.—
Not without hope we suffer and we mourn.

VII.

TO THE DAISY.

SWEET Flower ! belike one day to have
A place upon thy Poet's grave,
I welcome thee once more :
But He, who was on land, at sea,
My Brother, too, in loving thee,
Although he loved more silently,
Sleeps by his native shore.

Ah ! hopeful, hopeful was the day
When to that Ship he bent his way,
To govern and to guide :
His wish was gained : a little time
Would bring him back in manhood's prime
And free for life, these hills to climb ;
With all his wants supplied.

And full of hope day followed day
While that stout Ship at anchor lay
Beside the shores of Wight ;
The May had then made all things green ;
And, floating there, in pomp serene,
That Ship was goodly to be seen,
His pride and his delight !

Yet then, when called ashore, he sought
The tender peace of rural thought :
In more than happy mood
To your abodes, bright daisy Flowers !
He then would steal at leisure hours,
And loved you glittering in your bowers,
A starry multitude.

But hark the word !—the ship is gone ;—
Returns from her long course :—anon
Sets sail :—in season due,
Once more on English earth they stand :
But, when a third time from the land
They parted, sorrow was at hand
For Him and for his crew.

Ill-fated Vessel !—ghastly shock !
—At length delivered from the rock,
The deep she hath regained ;
And through the stormy night they steer ;
Labouring for life, in hope and fear,
To reach a safer shore—how near,
Yet not to be attained !

Silence !” the brave Commander cried ;
To that calm word a shriek replied,
That was the last death-shriek.
—A few (my soul oft sees that sight)
Survive upon the tall mast’s height ;
But one dear remnant of the night—
For Him in vain I seek.

Nine weeks beneath the moving sea
He lay in slumber quietly ;
Enforced by wind or wave
To quit the Ship for which he died,
All claims of duty satisfied ;
And there they found him at her side ;
And bore him to the grave.

Again service ! yet not vainly done
On this, if other end were none,
That He, who had been cast
Upon a way of life unmeet
For such a gentle Soul and sweet,
Should find an undisturbed retreat
Near what he loved, at last—

That neighbourhood of grove and field
To Him a resting-place should yield,
To meek man and a brave !
The birds shall sing and ocean make
Mournful murmur for his sake ;
And Thou, sweet Flower, shalt sleep and wake
Upon his senseless grave.

1805.

VIII.

ELEGIAC VERSES,

IN MEMORY OF MY BROTHER, JOHN WORDSWORTH,
COMMANDER OF THE E. I. COMPANY’S SHIP THE EARL OF
ABERGAVENNY, IN WHICH HE PERISHED BY CALAMITOUS
SHIPWRECK, FEB. 6TH, 1805.

Composed near the Mountain track, that leads from Gras-
mere through Grisdale Hawes, where it descends towards
Patterdale.

1805.

I.

THE Sheep-boy whistled loud, and lo !
That instant, startled by the shock,
The Buzzard mounted from the rock
Deliberate and slow :
Lord of the air, he took his flight ;
Oh ! could he on that woeful night
Have lent his wing, my Brother dear,
For one poor moment’s space to Thee,
And all who struggled with the Sea,
When safety was so near.

II.

Thus in the weakness of my heart
I spoke (but let that pang be still)
When rising from the rock at will,
I saw the Bird depart.
And let me calmly bless the Power
That meets me in this unknown Flower,
Affecting type of him I mourn !
With calmness suffer and believe,
And grieve, and know that I must grieve,
Not cheerless, though forlorn.

III.

Here did we stop ; and here looked round
While each into himself descends,
For that last thought of parting Friends
That is not to be found.
Hidden was Grasmere Vale from sight,
Our home and his, his heart’s delight,
His quiet heart’s selected home.
But time before him melts away,
And he hath feeling of a day
Of blessedness to come.

IV.

Full soon in sorrow did I weep,
Taught that the mutual hope was dust,
In sorrow, but for higher trust,
How miserably deep !
All vanished in a single word,
A breath, a sound, and scarcely heard.

Sea—Ship—drowned—Shipwreck—so it came,
The meek, the brave, the good, was gone ;
He who had been our living John
Was nothing but a name.

v.

That was indeed a parting ! oh,
Glad am I, glad that it is past ;
For there were some on whom it cast
Unutterable woe.
But they as well as I have gains ;—
From many a humble source, to pains
Like these, there comes a mild release ;
Even here I feel it, even this Plant
Is in its beauty ministrant
To comfort and to peace.

vi.

He would have loved thy modest grace,
Meek Flower ! To Him I would have said,
"It grows upon its native bed
Beside our Parting-place ;
There, cleaving to the ground, it lies
With multitude of purple eyes,
Spangling a cushion green like moss ;
But we will see it, joyful tide !
Some day, to see it in its pride,
The mountain will we cross."

vii.

—Brother and friend, if verse of mine
Have power to make thy virtues known,
Here let a monumental Stone
Stand—sacred as a Shrine ;
And to the few who pass this way,
Traveller or Shepherd, let it say,
Long as these mighty rocks endure,—
Oh do not Thou too fondly brood,
Although deserving of all good,
On any earthly hope, however pure * !

ix.

LINES

Composed at Grasmere, during a walk one Evening, after a stormy day, the Author having just read in a Newspaper that the dissolution of Mr. Fox was hourly expected.

LOUD is the Vale ! the Voice is up
With which she speaks when storms are gone,
A mighty unison of streams !
Of all her Voices, One !

* The plant alluded to is the Moss Campion (*Silene acaulis*, of Linnaeus). See note at the end of the volume.
See among the Poems on the "Naming of places," No vi.

Loud is the Vale ;—this inland Depth
In peace is roaring like the Sea ;
Yon star upon the mountain-top
Is listening quietly.

Sad was I, even to pain deprest,
Importunate and heavy load * !
The Comforter hath found me here,
Upon this lonely road ;

And many thousands now are sad—
Wait the fulfilment of their fear ;
For he must die who is their stay,
Their glory disappear.

A Power is passing from the earth
To breathless Nature's dark abyss ;
But when the great and good depart
What is it more than this—

That Man, who is from God sent forth,
Doth yet again to God return ?—
Such ebb and flow must ever be,
Then wherefore should we mourn ?

1866.

x.

INVOCATION TO THE EARTH.

FEBRUARY, 1816.

i.

"REST, rest, perturbed Earth !
O rest, thou doleful Mother of Mankind !"
A Spirit sang in tones more plaintive than the wind
"From regions where no evil thing has birth
I come—thy stains to wash away,
Thy cherished fetters to unbind,
And open thy sad eyes upon a milder day.
The Heavens are thronged with martyrs that have
risen

From out thy noisome prison ;
The penal caverns groan

With tens of thousands rent from off the tree
Of hopeful life,—by battle's whirlwind blown
Into the deserts of Eternity.
Unpitied havoc ! Victims unlamented !
But not on high, where madness is resented,
And murder causes some sad tears to flow,
Though, from the widely-sweeping blow,
The choirs of Angels spread, triumphantly
augmented.

* Importuna e grave salma.

MICHAEL ANGELO.

II.

"False Parent of Mankind!
Obdurate, proud, and blind,
Sprinkle thee with soft celestial dews,
My lost, maternal heart to re-infuse!
Suttering this far-fetched moisture from my wings,
On the act a blessing I implore,
Which the rivers in their secret springs,
The rivers stained so oft with human gore,
Are conscious;—may the like return no more!
My Discord—for a Seraph's care
Shall be attended with a bolder prayer—
My she, who once disturbed the seats of bliss
These mortal spheres above,
I chained for ever to the black abyss!
And thou, O rescued Earth, by peace and love,
And merciful desires, thy sanctity approve!"

The Spirit ended his mysterious rite,
And the pure vision closed in darkness infinite.

XI.

LINES

WRITTEN ON A BLANK LEAF IN A COPY OF THE AUTHOR'S
POEM "THE EXCURSION," UPON HEARING OF THE DEATH
OF THE LATE VICAR OF KENDAL.

Public notice, with reluctance strong,
I deliver this unfinished Song;
For one happy issue;—and I look
With self-congratulation on the Book
Which pious, learned, MURFITT saw and read;—
Upon my thoughts his saintly Spirit fed;
He conjoined the new-born Lay with grateful heart—
He boding not how soon he must depart;
Sweetening that to him the joy was given
Which good men take with them from earth to
heaven.

XII.

ELEGIAC STANZAS.

(ADDRESSED TO SIR G. H. B. UPON THE DEATH OF HIS
SISTER-IN-LAW.)

1824.

For a dirge! But why complain?
Ask rather a triumphal strain
When FERMOR'S race is run;
A garland of immortal boughs
To twine around the Christian's brows,
Whose glorious work is done.

We pay a high and holy debt;
No tears of passionate regret
Shall stain this votive lay;
Ill-worthy, Beaumont! were the grief
That flings itself on wild relief
When Saints have passed away.

Sad doom, at Sorrow's shrine to kneel,
For ever covetous to feel,
And impotent to bear!
Such once was hers—to think and think
On severed love, and only sink
From anguish to despair!

But nature to its inmost part
Faith had refined; and to her heart
A peaceful cradle given:
Calm as the dew-drop's, free to rest
Within a breeze-fanned rose's breast
Till it exhales to Heaven.

Was ever Spirit that could bend
So graciously!—that could descend,
Another's need to suit,
So promptly from her lofty throne?—
In works of love, in these alone,
How restless, how minute!

Pale was her hue; yet mortal cheek
Ne'er kindled with a livelier streak
When aught had suffered wrong,—
When aught that breathes had felt a wound;
Such look the Oppressor might confound,
However proud and strong.

But hushed be every thought that springs
From out the bitterness of things;
Her quiet is secure;
No thorns can pierce her tender feet,
Whose life was, like the violet, sweet,
As climbing jasmine, pure—

As snowdrop on an infant's grave,
Or lily heaving with the wave
That feeds it and defends;
As Vesper, ere the star hath kissed
The mountain top, or breathed the mist
That from the vale ascends.

Thou takest not away, O Death!
Thou strikest—absence perisheth,
Indifference is no more;
The future brightens on our sight;
For on the past hath fallen a light
That tempts us to adore.

XIII.

ELEGIAC MUSINGS

IN THE GROUNDS OF COLEORTON HALL, THE SEAT OF THE
LATE SIR G. H. BEAUMONT, BART.

In these grounds stands the Parish Church, wherein is a mural monument bearing an Inscription which, in deference to the earnest request of the deceased, is confined to name, dates, and these words:—‘Enter not into judgment with thy servant, O LORD!’

With copious eulogy in prose or rhyme
Graven on the tomb we struggle against Time,
Alas, how feebly! but our feelings rise
And still we struggle when a good man dies:
Such offering BEAUMONT dreaded and forbade,
A spirit meek in self-abasement clad.
Yet *here* at least, though few have numbered days
That shunned so modestly the light of praise,
His graceful manners, and the temperate ray
Of that arch fancy which would round him play,
Brightening a converse never known to swerve
From courtesy and delicate reserve;
That sense, the bland philosophy of life,
Which checked discussion ere it warmed to strife;
Those rare accomplishments, and varied powers,
Might have their record among sylvan bowers.
Oh, fled for ever! vanished like a blast
That shook the leaves in myriads as it passed;—
Gone from this world of earth, air, sea, and sky,
From all its spirit-moving imagery,
Intensely studied with a painter’s eye,
A poet’s heart; and, for congenial view,
Portrayed with happiest pencil, not untrue
To common recognitions while the line
Flowed in a course of sympathy divine;—
Oh! severed, too abruptly, from delights
That all the seasons shared with equal rights;—
Rapt in the grace of undismantled age,
From soul-felt music, and the treasured page
Lit by that evening lamp which loved to shed
Its mellow lustre round thy honoured head;
While Friends beheld thee give with eye, voice,
mien,
More than theatric force to Shakspeare’s scene;—
If thou hast heard me—if thy Spirit know
Aught of these bowers and whence their pleasures
flow;
If things in our remembrance held so dear,
And thoughts and projects fondly cherished here,
To thy exalted nature only seem
Time’s vanities, light fragments of earth’s dream—
Rebuke us not!—The mandate is obeyed
That said, “Let praise be mute where I am laid;”

The holier deprecation, given in trust
To the cold marble, waits upon thy dust;
Yet have we found how slowly genuine grief
From *silent* admiration wins relief.
Too long abashed thy Name is like a rose
That doth ‘within itself its sweetness close;’
A drooping daisy changed into a cup
In which her bright-eyed beauty is shut up.
Within these groves, where still are fitting by
Shades of the Past, oft noticed with a sigh,
Shall stand a votive Tablet, haply free,
When towers and temples fall, to speak of Thee!
If sculptured emblems of our mortal doom
Recal not there the wisdom of the Tomb,
Green ivy risen from out the cheerful earth,
Will fringe the lettered stone; and herbs spring
forth,
Whose fragrance, by soft dews and rain unbound,
Shall penetrate the heart without a wound;
While truth and love their purposes fulfil,
Commemorating genius, talent, skill,
That could not lie concealed where Thou wert
known;
Thy virtues *He* must judge, and He alone,
The God upon whose mercy they are thrown.

Nov. 1830.

XIV.

WRITTEN AFTER THE DEATH OF
CHARLES LAMB.

To a good Man of most dear memory
This Stone is sacred. Here he lies apart
From the great city where he first drew breath,
Was reared and taught; and humbly earned his
bread,
To the strict labours of the merchant’s desk
By duty chained. Not seldom did those tasks
Tease, and the thought of time so spent depress,
His spirit, but the recompence was high;
Firm Independence, Bounty’s rightful sire;
Affections, warm as sunshine, free as air;
And when the precious hours of leisure came,
Knowledge and wisdom, gained from converse sweet
With books, or while he ranged the crowded streets
With a keen eye, and overflowing heart:
So genius triumphed over seeming wrong,
And poured out truth in works by thoughtful love
Inspired—works potent over smiles and tears.
And as round mountain-tops the lightning plays,
Thus innocently sported, breaking forth
As from a cloud of some grave sympathy,
Humour and wild instinctive wit, and all

The vivid flashes of his spoken words.
 From the most gentle creature nursed in fields
 Had been derived the name he bore—a name,
 Wherever christian altars have been raised,
 Hallowed to meekness and to innocence ;
 And if in him meekness at times gave way,
 Provoked out of herself by troubles strange,
 Many and strange, that hung about his life ;
 Still, at the centre of his being, lodged
 A soul by resignation sanctified :
 And if too often, self-reproached, he felt
 That innocence belongs not to our kind,
 A power that never ceased to abide in him,
 Charity, 'mid the multitude of sins
 That she can cover, left not his exposed
 To an unforgiving judgment from just Heaven.
 O, he was good, if e'er a good Man lived !

* * * * *
 From a reflecting mind and sorrowing heart
 Those simple lines flowed with an earnest wish,
 Though but a doubting hope, that they might serve
 Fitly to guard the precious dust of him
 Whose virtues called them forth. That aim is
 missed ;
 For much that truth most urgently required
 Had from a faltering pen been asked in vain :
 Yet, haply, on the printed page received,
 The imperfect record, there, may stand unblamed
 As long as verse of mine shall breathe the air
 Of memory, or see the light of love.

Thou wert a scorner of the fields, my Friend,
 But more in show than truth ; and from the fields,
 And from the mountains, to thy rural grave
 Transported, my soothed spirit hovers o'er
 Its green untrodden turf, and blowing flowers ;
 And taking up a voice shall speak (tho' still
 Awed by the theme's peculiar sanctity
 Which words less free presumed not even to touch)
 Of that fraternal love, whose heaven-lit lamp
 From infancy, through manhood, to the last
 Of threescore years, and to thy latest hour,
 Burnt on with ever-strengthening light, enshrined
 Within thy bosom.

' Wonderful ' hath been
 The love established between man and man,
 ' Passing the love of women ; ' and between
 Man and his help-mate in fast wedlock joined
 Through God, is raised a spirit and soul of love
 Without whose blissful influence Paradise
 Had been no Paradise ; and earth were now
 A waste where creatures bearing human form,
 Direst of savage beasts, would roam in fear,
 Joyless and comfortless. Our days glide on ;

And let him grieve who cannot choose but grieve
 That he hath been an Elm without his Vine,
 And her bright dower of clustering charities,
 That, round his trunk and branches, might have clung
 Enriching and adorning. Unto thee,
 Not so enriched, not so adorned, to thee
 Was given (say rather thou of later birth
 Wert given to her) a Sister—'tis a word
 Timidly uttered, for she *lives*, the meek,
 The self-restraining, and the ever-kind ;
 In whom thy reason and intelligent heart
 Found—for all interests, hopes, and tender cares,
 All softening, humanising, hallowing powers,
 Whether withheld, or for her sake unsought—
 More than sufficient recompense !

Her love
 (What weakness prompts the voice to tell it here?)
 Was as the love of mothers ; and when years,
 Lifting the boy to man's estate, had called
 The long-protected to assume the part
 Of a protector, the first filial tie
 Was undissolved ; and, in or out of sight,
 Remained imperishably interwoven
 With life itself. Thus, 'mid a shifting world,
 Did they together testify of time
 And season's difference—a double tree
 With two collateral stems sprung from one root ;
 Such were they—such thro' life they *might* have been
 In union, in partition only such ;
 Otherwise wrought the will of the Most High ;
 Yet, thro' all visitations and all trials,
 Still they were faithful ; like two vessels launched
 From the same beach one ocean to explore
 With mutual help, and sailing—to their league
 True, as inexorable winds, or bars
 Floating or fixed of polar ice, allow.

But turn we rather, let my spirit turn
 With thine, O silent and invisible Friend !
 To those dear intervals, nor rare nor brief,
 When reunited, and by choice withdrawn
 From miscellaneous converse, ye were taught
 That the remembrance of foregone distress,
 And the worse fear of future ill (which oft
 Doth hang around it, as a sickly child
 Upon its mother) may be both alike
 Disarmed of power to unsettle present good
 So prized, and things inward and outward held
 In such an even balance, that the heart
 Acknowledges God's grace, his mercy feels,
 And in its depth of gratitude is still.

O gift divine of quiet sequestration !
 The hermit, exercised in prayer and praise,

And feeding daily on the hope of heaven,
Is happy in his vow, and fondly cleaves
To life-long singleness ; but happier far
Was to your souls, and, to the thoughts of others,
A thousand times more beautiful appeared,
Your *dual* loneliness. The sacred tie
Is broken ; yet why grieve ? for Time but holds
His moiety in trust, till Joy shall lead
To the blest world where parting is unknown.

1835.

XV.

EXTEMPORE EFFUSION UPON THE DEATH
OF JAMES HOGG.

WHEN first, descending from the moorlands,
I saw the Stream of Yarrow glide
Along a bare and open valley,
The Ettrick Shepherd was my guide.

When last along its banks I wandered,
Through groves that had begun to shed
Their golden leaves upon the pathways,
My steps the Border-minstrel led.

The mighty Minstrel breathes no longer,
Mid mouldering ruins low he lies ;
And death upon the braes of Yarrow,
Has closed the Shepherd-poet's eyes :

Nor has the rolling year twice measured,
From sign to sign, its stedfast course,
Since every mortal power of Coleridge
Was frozen at its marvellous source ;

The rapt One, of the godlike forehead,
The heaven-eyed creature sleeps in earth :
And Lamb, the frolic and the gentle,
Has vanished from his lonely hearth.

Like clouds that rake the mountain-summits,
Or waves that own no curbing hand,
How fast has brother followed brother,
From sunshine to the sunless land !

Yet I, whose lids from infant slumber
Were earlier raised, remain to hear
A timid voice, that asks in whispers,
" Who next will drop and disappear ? "

Our haughty life is crowned with darkness,
Like London with its own black wreath,
On which with thee, O Crabbe ! forth-looking,
I gazed from Hampstead's breezy heath.

As if but yesterday departed,
Thou too art gone before ; but why,
O'er ripe fruit, seasonably gathered,
Should frail survivors heave a sigh ?

Mourn rather for that holy Spirit,
Sweet as the spring, as ocean deep ;
For Her who, ere her summer faded,
Has sunk into a breathless sleep.

No more of old romantic sorrows,
For slaughtered Youth or love-lorn Maid !
With sharper grief is Yarrow smitten,
And Ettrick mourns with her their Poet dead*.

Nov. 1835.

XVI.

INSCRIPTION

FOR A MONUMENT IN CROSTHWAITHE CHURCH, IN THE
VALE OF KESWICK.

YE vales and hills whose beauty hither drew
The poet's steps, and fixed him here, on you,
His eyes have closed ! And ye, lov'd books, no
more

Shall Southey feed upon your precious lore,
To works that ne'er shall forfeit their renown,
Adding immortal labours of his own—
Whether he traced historic truth, with zeal
For the State's guidance, or the Church's weal,
Or Fancy, disciplined by studious art,
Inform'd his pen, or wisdom of the heart,
Or judgments sanctioned in the Patriot's mind
By reverence for the rights of all mankind.
Wide were his aims, yet in no human breast
Could private feelings meet for holier rest.
His joys, his griefs, have vanished like a cloud
From Skiddaw's top ; but he to heaven was vowed
Through his industrious life, and Christian faith
Calmed in his soul the fear of change and death.

* See Note.

ODE.

INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY FROM RECOLLECTIONS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD.

The Child is Father of the Man ;
 And I could wish my days to be
 Bound each to each by natural piety.
 See page 54.

I.

THERE was a time when meadow, grove, and stream,
 The earth, and every common sight,
 To me did seem
 Apparelled in celestial light,
 The glory and the freshness of a dream.
 It is not now as it hath been of yore ;—
 Turn whereso'er I may,
 By night or day,
 The things which I have seen I now can see no more.

II.

The Rainbow comes and goes,
 And lovely is the Rose,
 The Moon doth with delight
 Look round her when the heavens are bare,
 Waters on a starry night
 Are beautiful and fair ;
 The sunshine is a glorious birth ;
 But yet I know, where'er I go,
 That there hath past away a glory from the earth.

III.

Now, while the birds thus sing a joyous song,
 And while the young lambs bound
 As to the tabor's sound,
 To me alone there came a thought of grief :
 A timely utterance gave that thought relief,
 And I again am strong :
 The cataracts blow their trumpets from the steep ;
 No more shall grief of mine the season wrong ;
 I hear the Echoes through the mountains throng,
 The Winds come to me from the fields of sleep,
 And all the earth is gay ;
 Land and sea
 Give themselves up to jollity,
 And with the heart of May
 Doth every Beast keep holiday ;—
 Thou Child of Joy,
 Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts, thou happy
 Shepherd-boy !

IV.

Ye blessed Creatures, I have heard the call
 Ye to each other make ; I see
 The heavens laugh with you in your jubilee ;
 My heart is at your festival,
 My head hath its coronal,
 The fulness of your bliss, I feel—I feel it all.
 Oh evil day ! if I were sullen
 While Earth herself is adorning,
 This sweet May-morning,
 And the Children are culling
 On every side,
 In a thousand valleys far and wide,
 Fresh flowers ; while the sun shines warm,
 And the Babe leaps up on his Mother's arm :—
 I hear, I hear, with joy I hear !
 —But there's a Tree, of many, one,
 A single Field which I have looked upon,
 Both of them speak of something that is gone :
 The Pansy at my feet
 Doth the same tale repeat :
 Whither is fled the visionary gleam ?
 Where is it now, the glory and the dream ?

V.

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting :
 The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,
 Hath had elsewhere its setting,
 And cometh from afar :
 Not in entire forgetfulness,
 And not in utter nakedness,
 But trailing clouds of glory do we come
 From God, who is our home :
 Heaven lies about us in our infancy !
 Shades of the prison-house begin to close
 Upon the growing Boy,
 But He beholds the light, and whence it flows,
 He sees it in his joy ;
 The Youth, who daily farthest from the east
 Must travel, still is Nature's Priest,

And by the vision splendid
Is on his way attended ;
At length the Man perceives it die away,
And fade into the light of common day.

VI.

Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own ;
Yearnings she hath in her own natural kind,
And, even with something of a Mother's mind,
And no unworthy aim,
The homely Nurse doth all she can
To make her Foster-child, her Inmate Man,
Forget the glories he hath known,
And that imperial palace whence he came.

VII.

Behold the Child among his new-born blisses,
A six years' Darling of a pigmy size !
See, where 'mid work of his own hand he lies,
Fretted by sallies of his mother's kisses,
With light upon him from his father's eyes !
See, at his feet, some little plan or chart,
Some fragment from his dream of human life,
Shaped by himself with newly-learned art ;

A wedding or a festival,
A mourning or a funeral ;
And this hath now his heart,
And unto this he frames his song :
Then will he fit his tongue

To dialogues of business, love, or strife ;
But it will not be long
Ere this be thrown aside,
And with new joy and pride

The little Actor cons another part ;
Filling from time to time his 'humorous stage'
With all the Persons, down to palsied Age,
That Life brings with her in her equipage ;
As if his whole vocation
Were endless imitation.

VIII.

Thou, whose exterior semblance doth belie
Thy Soul's immensity ;
Thou best Philosopher, who yet dost keep
Thy heritage, thou Eye among the blind,
That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal deep,
Haunted for ever by the eternal mind,—
Mighty Prophet ! Seer blest !
On whom those truths do rest,
Which we are toiling all our lives to find,
In darkness lost, the darkness of the grave ;
Thou, over whom thy Immortality

Broods like the Day, a Master o'er a Slave,
A Presence which is not to be put by ;
Thou little Child, yet glorious in the might
Of heaven-born freedom on thy being's height,
Why with such earnest pains dost thou provoke
The years to bring the inevitable yoke,
Thus blindly with thy blessedness at strife ?
Full soon thy Soul shall have her earthly freight,
And custom lie upon thee with a weight,
Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life !

IX.

O joy ! that in our embers
Is something that doth live,
That nature yet remembers
What was so fugitive !

The thought of our past years in me doth breed
Perpetual benediction : not indeed
For that which is most worthy to be blest ;
Delight and liberty, the simple creed
Of Childhood, whether busy or at rest,
With new-fledged hope still fluttering in his
breast :—

Not for these I raise
The song of thanks and praise ;
But for those obstinate questionings
Of sense and outward things,
Fallings from us, vanishings ;
Blank misgivings of a Creature
Moving about in worlds not realised,
High instincts before which our mortal Nature
Did tremble like a guilty Thing surprised :

But for those first affections,
Those shadowy recollections,
Which, be they what they may,
Are yet the fountain light of all our day,
Are yet a master light of all our seeing ;
Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make
Our noisy years seem moments in the being
Of the eternal Silence : truths that wake,
To perish never ;

Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavour,
Nor Man nor Boy,
Nor all that is at enmity with joy,
Can utterly abolish or destroy !
Hence in a season of calm weather
Though inland far we be,
Our Souls have sight of that immortal sea
Which brought us hither,
Can in a moment travel thither,
And see the Children sport upon the shore,
And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

x.

Then sing, ye Birds, sing, sing a joyous song !
 And let the young Lambs bound
 As to the tabor's sound !
 We in thought will join your throng,
 Ye that pipe and ye that play,
 Ye that through your hearts to-day
 Feel the gladness of the May !
 What though the radiance which was once so bright
 Be now for ever taken from my sight,
 Though nothing can bring back the hour
 Of splendour in the grass, of glory in the flower ;
 We will grieve not, rather find
 Strength in what remains behind ;
 In the primal sympathy
 Which having been must ever be ;
 In the soothing thoughts that spring
 Out of human suffering ;
 In the faith that looks through death,
 In years that bring the philosophic mind.

xi.

And O, ye Fountains, Meadows, Hills, and Groves,
 Forebode not any severing of our loves !
 Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your might ;
 I only have relinquished one delight
 To live beneath your more habitual sway.
 I love the Brooks which down their channels fret,
 Even more than when I tripped lightly as they ;
 The innocent brightness of a new-born Day
 Is lovely yet ;
 The Clouds that gather round the setting sun
 Do take a sober colouring from an eye
 That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality ;
 Another race hath been, and other palms are won.
 Thanks to the human heart by which we live,
 Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fears,
 To me the meanest flower that blows can give
 Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.

1803—6.

THE PRELUDE,

OR GROWTH OF A POET'S MIND;

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL POEM.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following Poem was commenced in the beginning of the year 1799, and completed in the summer of 1805.

The design and occasion of the work are described by the Author in his Preface to the EXCURSION, first published in 1814, where he thus speaks :—

“Several years ago, when the Author retired to his native mountains with the hope of being enabled to construct a literary work that might live, it was a reasonable thing that he should take a review of his own mind, and examine how far Nature and Education had qualified him for such an employment.

“As subsidiary to this preparation, he undertook to record, in verse, the origin and progress of his own powers, as far as he was acquainted with them.

“That work, addressed to a dear friend, most distinguished for his knowledge and genius, and to whom the Author's intellect is deeply indebted, has been long finished ; and the result of the investigation which gave rise to it, was a determination to compose a philosophical Poem, containing views of Man, Nature, and Society, and to be entitled the ‘Recluse ;’ as having for its principal subject the sensations and opinions of a poet living in retirement.

“The preparatory poem is biographical, and conducts the history of the Author's mind to the point when he was emboldened to hope that his faculties were sufficiently matured for entering upon the arduous labour which he had proposed to himself ; and the two works have the same kind of relation to each other, if he may so express himself, as the Ante-chapel has to the body of a Gothic church. Continuing this allusion, he may be permitted to add, that his minor pieces, which have been long before the public, when they shall be properly arranged, will be found by the attentive reader to have such connection with the main work as may give them

claim to be likened to the little cells, oratories, and sepulchral recesses, ordinarily included in those edifices.”

Such was the Author's language in the year 1814.

It will thence be seen, that the present Poem was intended to be introductory to the RECLUSE, and that the RECLUSE, if completed, would have consisted of Three Parts. Of these, the Second Part alone, viz., the EXCURSION, was finished, and given to the world by the Author.

The First Book of the First Part of the RECLUSE still remains in manuscript ; but the Third Part was only planned. The materials of which it would have been formed have, however, been incorporated, for the most part, in the Author's other Publications, written subsequently to the EXCURSION.

The Friend, to whom the present Poem is addressed, was the late SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE, who was resident in Malta, for the restoration of his health, when the greater part of it was composed.

Mr. Coleridge read a considerable portion of the Poem while he was abroad ; and his feelings on hearing it recited by the Author (after his return to his own country), are recorded in his Verses, addressed to Mr. Wordsworth, which will be found in the “Sibylline Leaves,” p. 197, ed. 1817, or “Poetical Works, by S. T. Coleridge, vol. i., p. 206.—ED.

RYDAL MOUNT,
July 13th, 1850.

BOOK FIRST.

INTRODUCTION.—CHILDHOOD AND SCHOOL-TIME.

O THERE is blessing in this gentle breeze,
 A visitant that while it fans my cheek
 Doth seem half-conscious of the joy it brings
 From the green fields, and from yon azure sky.
 Whate'er its mission, the soft breeze can come
 To none more grateful than to me; escaped
 From the vast city, where I long had pined
 A discontented sojourner: now free,
 Free as a bird to settle where I will.
 What dwelling shall receive me? in what vale
 Shall be my harbour? underneath what grove
 Shall I take up my home? and what clear stream
 Shall with its murmur lull me into rest?
 The earth is all before me. With a heart
 Joyous, nor scared at its own liberty,
 I look about; and should the chosen guide
 Be nothing better than a wandering cloud,
 I cannot miss my way. I breathe again!
 Trances of thought and mountings of the mind
 Come fast upon me: it is shaken off,
 That burthen of my own unnatural self,
 The heavy weight of many a weary day
 Not mine, and such as were not made for me.
 Long months of peace (if such bold word accord
 With any promises of human life),
 Long months of ease and undisturbed delight
 Are mine in prospect; whither shall I turn,
 By road or pathway, or through trackless field,
 Up hill or down, or shall some floating thing
 Upon the river point me out my course?

Dear Liberty! Yet what would it avail
 But for a gift that consecrates the joy?
 For I, methought, while the sweet breath of
 heaven

Was blowing on my body, felt within
 A correspondent breeze, that gently moved
 With quickening virtue, but is now become
 A tempest, a redundant energy,
 Vexing its own creation. Thanks to both,
 And their congenial powers, that, while they join
 In breaking up a long-continued frost,
 Bring with them vernal promises, the hope
 Of active days urged on by flying hours,—

Days of sweet leisure, taxed with patient thought
 Abstruse, nor wanting punctual service high,
 Matins and vespers of harmonious verse!

Thus far, O Friend! did I, not used to make
 A present joy the matter of a song,
 Pour forth that day my soul in measured strains
 That would not be forgotten, and are here
 Recorded: to the open fields I told
 A prophecy: poetic numbers came
 Spontaneously to clothe in priestly robe
 A renovated spirit singled out,
 Such hope was mine, for holy services.
 My own voice cheered me, and, far more, the
 mind's
 Internal echo of the imperfect sound;
 To both I listened, drawing from them both
 A cheerful confidence in things to come.

Content and not unwilling now to give
 A respite to this passion, I paced on
 With brisk and eager steps; and came, at length,
 To a green shady place, where down I sate
 Beneath a tree, slackening my thoughts by choice,
 And settling into gentler happiness.
 'Twas autumn, and a clear and placid day,
 With warmth, as much as needed, from a sun
 Two hours declined towards the west; a day
 With silver clouds, and sunshine on the grass,
 And in the sheltered and the sheltering grove
 A perfect stillness. Many were the thoughts
 Encouraged and dismissed, till choice was made
 Of a known Vale, whither my feet should turn,
 Nor rest till they had reached the very door
 Of the one cottage which methought I saw.
 No picture of mere memory ever looked
 So fair; and while upon the fancied scene
 I gazed with growing love, a higher power
 Than Fancy gave assurance of some work
 Of glory there forthwith to be begun,
 Perhaps too there performed. Thus long I mused,
 Nor e'er lost sight of what I mused upon,
 Save when, amid the stately grove of oaks,
 Now here, now there, an acorn, from its cup
 Dislodged, through sere leaves rustled, or at once
 To the bare earth dropped with a startling sound.
 From that soft couch I rose not, till the sun
 Had almost touched the horizon; casting then

A backward glance upon the curling cloud
 Of city smoke, by distance ruralised ;
 Keen as a Truant or a Fugitive,
 But as a Pilgrim resolute, I took,
 Even with the chance equipment of that hour,
 The road that pointed toward the chosen Vale.
 It was a splendid evening, and my soul
 Once more made trial of her strength, nor lacked
 Æolian visitations ; but the harp
 Was soon defrauded, and the banded host
 Of harmony dispersed in straggling sounds,
 And lastly utter silence ! "Be it so ;
 Why think of anything but present good ?"
 So, like a home-bound labourer I pursued
 My way beneath the mellowing sun, that shed
 Mild influence ; nor left in me one wish
 Again to bend the Sabbath of that time
 To a servile yoke. What need of many words ?
 A pleasant loitering journey, through three days
 Continued, brought me to my hermitage.
 I spare to tell of what ensued, the life
 In common things—the endless store of things,
 Rare, or at least so seeming, every day
 Found all about me in one neighbourhood—
 The self-congratulation, and, from morn
 To night, unbroken cheerfulness serene.
 But speedily an earnest longing rose
 To brace myself to some determined aim,
 Reading or thinking ; either to lay up
 New stores, or rescue from decay the old
 By timely interference : and therewith
 Came hopes still higher, that with outward life
 I might endue some airy phantasies
 That had been floating loose about for years,
 And to such beings temperately deal forth
 The many feelings that oppressed my heart.
 That hope hath been discouraged ; welcome light
 Dawns from the east, but dawns to disappear
 And mock me with a sky that ripens not
 Into a steady morning : if my mind,
 Remembering the bold promise of the past,
 Would gladly grapple with some noble theme,
 Vain is her wish ; where'er she turns she finds
 Impediments from day to day renewed.

And now it would content me to yield up
 Those lofty hopes awhile, for present gifts
 Of humbler industry. But, oh, dear Friend !
 The Poet, gentle creature as he is,
 Hath, like the Lover, his unruly times ;
 His fits when he is neither sick nor well,
 Though no distress be near him but his own
 Unmanageable thoughts : his mind, best pleased
 While she as devious as the mother dove

Sits brooding, lives not always to that end,
 But like the innocent bird, hath goadings on
 That drive her as in trouble through the groves ;
 With me is now such passion, to be blamed
 No otherwise than as it lasts too long.

When, as becomes a man who would prepare
 For such an arduous work, I through myself
 Make rigorous inquisition, the report
 Is often cheering ; for I neither seem
 To lack that first great gift, the vital soul,
 Nor general Truths, which are themselves a sort
 Of Elements and Agents, Under-powers,
 Subordinate helpers of the living mind :
 Nor am I naked of external things,
 Forms, images, nor numerous other aids
 Of less regard, though won perhaps with toil
 And needful to build up a Poet's praise.
 Time, place, and manners do I seek, and these
 Are found in plenteous store, but nowhere such
 As may be singled out with steady choice ;
 No little band of yet remembered names
 Whom I, in perfect confidence, might hope
 To summon back from lonesome banishment,
 And make them dwellers in the hearts of men
 Now living, or to live in future years.
 Sometimes the ambitious Power of choice, mis-
 taking

Proud spring-tide swellings for a regular sea,
 Will settle on some British theme, some old
 Romantic tale by Milton left unsung ;
 More often turning to some gentle place
 Within the groves of Chivalry, I pipe
 To shepherd swains, or seated harp in hand,
 Amid reposing knights by a river side
 Or fountain, listen to the grave reports
 Of dire enchantments faced and overcome
 By the strong mind, and tales of warlike feats,
 Where spear encountered spear, and sword with
 sword
 Fought, as if conscious of the blazonry
 That the shield bore, so glorious was the strife ;
 Whence inspiration for a song that winds
 Through ever changing scenes of votive quest
 Wrongs to redress, harmonious tribute paid
 To patient courage and unblemished truth,
 To firm devotion, zeal unquenchable,
 And Christian meekness hallowing faithful loves.
 Sometimes, more sternly moved, I would relate
 How vanquished Mithridates northward passed,
 And, hidden in the cloud of years, became
 Odin, the Father of a race by whom
 Perished the Roman Empire : how the friends
 And followers of Sertorius, out of Spain

Flying, found shelter in the Fortunate Isles,
 And left their usages, their arts and laws,
 To disappear by a slow gradual death,
 To dwindle and to perish one by one,
 Starved in those narrow bounds : but not the soul
 Of Liberty, which fifteen hundred years
 Survived, and, when the European came
 With skill and power that might not be withstood,
 Did, like a pestilence, maintain its hold
 And wasted down by glorious death that race
 Of natural heroes : or I would record
 How, in tyrannic times, some high-souled man,
 Unnamed among the chronicles of kings,
 Suffered in silence for Truth's sake : or tell,
 How that one Frenchman,* through continued
 force

Of meditation on the inhuman deeds
 Of those who conquered first the Indian Isles,
 Went single in his ministry across
 The Ocean ; not to comfort the oppressed,
 But, like a thirsty wind, to roam about
 Withering the Oppressor : how Gustavus sought
 Help at his need in Dalecarlia's mines :
 How Wallace fought for Scotland ; left the name
 Of Wallace to be found, like a wild flower,
 All over his dear Country ; left the deeds
 Of Wallace, like a family of Ghosts,
 To people the steep rocks and river banks,
 Her natural sanctuaries, with a local soul
 Of independence and stern liberty.
 Sometimes it suits me better to invent
 A tale from my own heart, more near akin
 To my own passions and habitual thoughts ;
 Some variegated story, in the main
 Lofty, but the unsubstantial structure melts
 Before the very sun that brightens it,
 Mist into air dissolving ! Then a wish,
 My last and favourite aspiration, mounts
 With yearning toward some philosophic song
 Of Truth that cherishes our daily life ;
 With meditations passionate from deep
 Recesses in man's heart, immortal verse
 Thoughtfully fitted to the Orphean lyre ;
 But from this awful burthen I full soon
 Take refuge and beguile myself with trust
 That mellow years will bring a ripier mind
 And clearer insight. Thus my days are past
 In contradiction ; with no skill to part
 Vague longing, haply bred by want of power,
 From paramount impulse not to be withstood,

A timorous capacity from prudence,
 From circumspection, infinite delay.
 Humility and modest awe themselves
 Betray me, serving often for a cloak
 To a more subtle selfishness ; that now
 Locks every function up in blank reserve,
 Now dupes me, trusting to an anxious eye
 That with intrusive restlessness beats off
 Simplicity and self-presented truth.
 Ah ! better far than this, to stray about
 Voluptuously through fields and rural walks,
 And ask no record of the hours, resigned
 To vacant musing, unproved neglect
 Of all things, and deliberate holiday.
 Far better never to have heard the name
 Of zeal and just ambition, than to live
 Baffled and plagued by a mind that every hour
 Turns recreant to her task ; takes heart again,
 Then feels immediately some hollow thought
 Hang like an interdict upon her hopes.
 This is my lot ; for either still I find
 Some imperfection in the chosen theme,
 Or see of absolute accomplishment
 Much wanting, so much wanting, in myself,
 That I recoil and droop, and seek repose
 In listlessness from vain perplexity,
 Unprofitably travelling toward the grave,
 Like a false steward who hath much received
 And renders nothing back.

Was it for this
 That one, the fairest of all rivers, loved
 To blend his murmurs with my nurse's song,
 And, from his alder shades and rocky falls,
 And from his fords and shallows, sent a voice
 That flowed along my dreams ? For this, didst
 thou,
 O Derwent ! winding among grassy holms
 Where I was looking on, a babe in arms,
 Make ceaseless music that composed my thoughts
 To more than infant softness, giving me
 Amid the fretful dwellings of mankind
 A foretaste, a dim earnest, of the calm
 That Nature breathes among the hills and groves.
 When he had left the mountains and received
 On his smooth breast the shadow of those towers
 That yet survive, a shattered monument
 Of feudal sway, the bright blue river passed
 Along the margin of our terrace walk ;
 A tempting playmate whom we dearly loved.
 Oh, many a time have I, a five years' child,
 In a small mill-race severed from his stream,
 Made one long bathing of a summer's day ;
 Basked in the sun, and plunged and basked again
 Alternate, all a summer's day, or scoured

* Dominique de Gourgues, a French gentleman who
 went in 1568 to Florida to avenge the massacre of the
 French by the Spaniards there.—*Ed.*

The sandy fields, leaping through flowery groves
Of yellow ragwort ; or when rock and hill,
The woods, and distant Skiddaw's lofty height,
Were bronzed with deepest radiance, stood alone
Beneath the sky, as if I had been born
On Indian plains, and from my mother's hut
Had run abroad in wantonness, to sport
A naked savage, in the thunder shower.

Fair seed-time had my soul, and I grew up
Fostered alike by beauty and by fear :
Much favoured in my birth-place, and no less
In that beloved Vale to which erelong
We were transplanted—there were we let loose
For sports of wider range. Ere I had told
Ten birth-days, when among the mountain slopes
Frost, and the breath of frosty wind, had snapped
The last autumnal crocus, 'twas my joy
With store of springes o'er my shoulder hung
To range the open heights where woodcocks run
Along the smooth green turf. Through half the
night,

Scudding away from snare to snare, I plied
That anxious visitation ;—moon and stars
Were shining o'er my head. I was alone,
And seemed to be a trouble to the peace
That dwelt among them. Sometimes it befel
In these night wanderings, that a strong desire
O'erpowered my better reason, and the bird
Which was the captive of another's toil
Became my prey ; and when the deed was done
I heard among the solitary hills
Low breathings coming after me, and sounds
Of undistinguishable motion, steps
Almost as silent as the turf they trod.

Nor less when spring had warmed the cultured
Vale,

Moved we as plunderers where the mother-bird
Had in high places built her lodge ; though mean
Our object and inglorious, yet the end
Was not ignoble. Oh ! when I have hung
Above the raven's nest, by knots of grass
And half-inch fissures in the slippery rock
But ill sustained, and almost (so it seemed)
Suspended by the blast that blew amain,
Shouldering the naked crag, oh, at that time
While on the perilous ridge I hung alone,
With what strange utterance did the loud dry wind
Blow through my ear ! the sky seemed not a sky
Of earth—and with what motion moved the clouds !

Dust as we are, the immortal spirit grows
Like harmony in music ; there is a dark

Inscrutable workmanship that reconciles
Discordant elements, makes them cling together
In one society. How strange that all
The terrors, pains, and early miseries,
Regrets, vexations, lassitudes interfused
Within my mind, should e'er have borne a part,
And that a needful part, in making up
The calm existence that is mine when I
Am worthy of myself ! Praise to the end !
Thanks to the means which Nature designed to
employ ;

Whether her fearless visitings, or those
That came with soft alarm, like hurtless light
Opening the peaceful clouds ; or she may use
Severer interventions, ministry
More palpable, as best might suit her aim.

One summer evening (led by her) I found
A little boat tied to a willow tree
Within a rocky cave, its usual home.
Straight I unloosed her chain, and stepping in
Pushed from the shore. It was an act of stealth
And troubled pleasure, nor without the voice
Of mountain-echoes did my boat move on ;
Leaving behind her still, on either side,
Small circles glittering idly in the moon,
Until they melted all into one track
Of sparkling light. But now, like one who rows,
Proud of his skill, to reach a chosen point
With an unswerving line, I fixed my view
Upon the summit of a craggy ridge,
The horizon's utmost boundary ; far above
Was nothing but the stars and the grey sky.
She was an elfin pinnace ; lustily
I dipped my oars into the silent lake,
And, as I rose upon the stroke, my boat
Went heaving through the water like a swan ;
When, from behind that craggy steep till then
The horizon's bound, a huge peak, black and huge,
As if with voluntary power instinct
Upreared its head. I struck and struck again,
And growing still in stature the grim shape
Towered up between me and the stars, and still,
For so it seemed, with purpose of its own
And measured motion like a living thing,
Strode after me. With trembling oars I turned,
And through the silent water stole my way
Back to the covert of the willow tree ;
There in her mooring-place I left my bark,—
And through the meadows homeward went, in
grave

And serious mood ; but after I had seen
That spectacle, for many days, my brain
Worked with a dim and undetermined sense

Of unknown modes of being ; o'er my thoughts
 There hung a darkness, call it solitude
 Or blank desertion. No familiar shapes
 Remained, no pleasant images of trees,
 Of sea or sky, no colours of green fields ;
 But huge and mighty forms, that do not live
 Like living men, moved slowly through the mind
 By day, and were a trouble to my dreams.

* Wisdom and Spirit of the universe !
 Thou Soul that art the eternity of thought,
 That givest to forms and images a breath
 And everlasting motion, not in vain
 By day or star-light thus from my first dawn
 Of childhood didst thou intertwine for me
 The passions that build up our human soul ;
 Not with the mean and vulgar works of man,
 But with high objects, with enduring things—
 With life and nature—purifying thus
 The elements of feeling and of thought,
 And sanctifying, by such discipline,
 Both pain and fear, until we recognise
 A grandeur in the beatings of the heart.
 Nor was this fellowship vouchsafed to me
 With stinted kindness. In November days,
 When vapours rolling down the valley made
 A lonely scene more lonesome, among woods,
 At noon and 'mid the calm of summer nights,
 When, by the margin of the trembling lake,
 Beneath the gloomy hills homeward I went
 In solitude, such intercourse was mine ;
 Mine was it in the fields both day and night,
 And by the waters, all the summer long.

And in the frosty season, when the sun
 Was set, and visible for many a mile
 The cottage windows blazed through twilight
 gloom,
 I heeded not their summons : happy time
 It was indeed for all of us—for me
 It was a time of rapture ! Clear and loud
 The village clock tolled six,—I wheeled about,
 Proud and exulting like an untired horse
 That cares not for his home. All shod with steel,
 We hissed along the polished ice in games
 Confederate, imitative of the chase
 And woodland pleasures,—the resounding horn,
 The pack loud chiming, and the hunted hare.
 So through the darkness and the cold we flew,
 And not a voice was idle ; with the din
 Smitten, the precipices rang aloud ;
 The leafless trees and every icy crag

Tinkled like iron ; while far distant hills
 Into the tumult sent an alien sound
 Of melancholy not unnoticed, while the stars
 Eastward were sparkling clear, and in the west
 The orange sky of evening died away.
 Not seldom from the uproar I retired
 Into a silent bay, or sportively
 Glanced sideways, leaving the tumultuous throng,
 To cut across the reflex of a star
 That fled, and, flying still before me, gleamed
 Upon the glassy plain ; and oftentimes,
 When we had given our bodies to the wind,
 And all the shadowy banks on either side
 Came sweeping through the darkness, spinning
 still
 The rapid line of motion, then at once
 Have I, reclining back upon my heels,
 Stopped short ; yet still the solitary cliffs
 Wheeled by me—even as if the earth had rolled
 With visible motion her diurnal round !
 Behind me did they stretch in solemn train,
 Feebler and feebler, and I stood and watched
 Till all was tranquil as a dreamless sleep.

Ye Presences of Nature in the sky
 And on the earth ! Ye Visions of the hills !
 And Souls of lonely places ! can I think
 A vulgar hope was yours when ye employed
 Such ministry, when ye through many a year
 Haunting me thus among my boyish sports,
 On caves and trees, upon the woods and hills,
 Impressed upon all forms the characters
 Of danger or desire ; and thus did make
 The surface of the universal earth
 With triumph and delight, with hope and fear,
 Work like a sea ?

Not uselessly employed,
 Might I pursue this theme through every change
 Of exercise and play, to which the year
 Did summon us in his delightful round.

We were a noisy crew ; the sun in heaven
 Beheld not vales more beautiful than ours ;
 Nor saw a band in happiness and joy
 Richer, or worthier of the ground they trod.
 I could record with no reluctant voice
 The woods of autumn, and their hazel bowers
 With milk-white clusters hung ; the rod and line,
 True symbol of hope's foolishness, whose strong
 And unproved enchantment led us on
 By rocks and pools shut out from every star,
 All the green summer, to forlorn cascades
 Among the windings hid of mountain brooks.
 —Fading recollections ! at this hour

* These lines have been printed before. See p. 62.—Ed.

The heart is almost mine with which I felt,
 From some hill-top on sunny afternoons,
 The paper kite high among fleecy clouds
 Pull at her rein like an impetuous courser ;
 Or, from the meadows sent on gusty days,
 Beheld her breast the wind, then suddenly
 Dashed headlong, and rejected by the storm.

Ye lowly cottages wherein we dwelt,
 A ministration of your own was yours ;
 Can I forget you, being as you were
 So beautiful among the pleasant fields
 In which ye stood ? or can I here forget
 The plain and seemly countenance with which
 Ye dealt out your plain comforts ? Yet had ye
 Delights and exultations of your own.
 Eager and never weary we pursued
 Our home-amusements by the warm peat-fire
 At evening, when with pencil, and smooth slate
 In square divisions parcelled out and all
 With crosses and with cyphers scribbled o'er,
 We schemed and puzzled, head opposed to head
 In strife too humble to be named in verse :
 Or round the naked table, snow-white deal,
 Cherry or maple, sate in close array,
 And to the combat, Loo or Whist, led on
 A thick-ribbed army ; not, as in the world,
 Neglected and ungratefully thrown by
 Even for the very service they had wrought,
 But husbanded through many a long campaign.
 Uncouth assemblage was it, where no few
 Had changed their functions ; some, plebeian cards
 Which Fate, beyond the promise of their birth,
 Had dignified, and called to represent
 The persons of departed potentates.
 Oh, with what echoes on the board they fell !
 Ironie diamonds,—clubs, hearts, diamonds, spades,
 A congregation piteously akin !
 Cheap matter offered they to boyish wit,
 Those sooty knaves, precipitated down
 With scoffs and taunts, like Vulcan out of heaven :
 The paramount ace, a moon in her eclipse,
 Queens gleaming through their splendour's last
 decay,
 And monarchs surly at the wrongs sustained
 By royal visages. Meanwhile abroad
 Incessant rain was falling, or the frost
 Raged bitterly, with keen and silent tooth ;
 And, interrupting oft that eager game,
 From under Esthwaite's splitting fields of ice
 The pent-up air, struggling to free itself,
 Gave out to meadow grounds and hills a loud
 Protracted yelling, like the noise of wolves
 Howling in troops along the Bothnic Main.

Nor, sedulous as I have been to trace
 How Nature by extrinsic passion first
 Peopled the mind with forms sublime or fair,
 And made me love them, may I here omit
 How other pleasures have been mine, and joys
 Of subtler origin ; how I have felt,
 Not seldom even in that tempestuous time,
 Those hallowed and pure motions of the sense
 Which seem, in their simplicity, to own
 An intellectual charm ; that calm delight
 Which, if I err not, surely must belong
 To those first-born affinities that fit
 Our new existence to existing things,
 And, in our dawn of being, constitute
 The bond of union between life and joy.

Yes, I remember when the changeful earth,
 And twice five summers on my mind had stamped
 The faces of the moving year, even then
 I held unconscious intercourse with beauty
 Old as creation, drinking in a pure
 Organic pleasure from the silver wreaths
 Of curling mist, or from the level plain
 Of waters coloured by impending clouds.

The sands of Westmoreland, the creeks and bays
 Of Cumbria's rocky limits, they can tell
 How, when the Sea threw off his evening shade,
 And to the shepherd's hut on distant hills
 Sent welcome notice of the rising moon,
 How I have stood, to fancies such as these
 A stranger, linking with the spectacle
 No conscious memory of a kindred sight,
 And bringing with me no peculiar sense
 Of quietness or peace ; yet have I stood,
 Even while mine eye hath moved o'er many a
 league
 Of shining water, gathering as it seemed
 Through every hair-breadth in that field of light
 New pleasure like a bee among the flowers.

Thus oft amid those fits of vulgar joy
 Which, through all seasons, on a child's pursuits
 Are prompt attendants, 'mid that giddy bliss
 Which, like a tempest, works along the blood
 And is forgotten ; even then I felt
 Gleams like the flashing of a shield ;—the earth
 And common face of Nature spake to me
 Rememberable things ; sometimes, 'tis true,
 By chance collisions and quaint accidents
 (Like those ill-sorted unions, work supposed
 Of evil-minded fairies), yet not vain
 Nor profitless, if haply they impressed
 Collateral objects and appearances,

Albeit lifeless then, and doomed to sleep
 Until maturer seasons called them forth
 To impregnate and to elevate the mind.
 —And if the vulgar joy by its own weight
 Wearied itself out of the memory,
 The scenes which were a witness of that joy
 Remained in their substantial lineaments
 Depicted on the brain, and to the eye
 Were visible, a daily sight; and thus
 By the impressive discipline of fear,
 By pleasure and repeated happiness,
 So frequently repeated, and by force
 Of obscure feelings representative
 Of things forgotten, these same scenes so bright,
 So beautiful, so majestic in themselves,
 Though yet the day was distant, did become
 Habitually dear, and all their forms
 And changeful colours by invisible links
 Were fastened to the affections.

I began
 My story early—not misled, I trust,
 By an infirmity of love for days
 Disowned by memory—ere the breath of spring
 Planting my snowdrops among winter snows:
 For will it seem to thee, O Friend! so prompt
 A sympathy, that I have lengthened out
 With fond and feeble tongue a tedious tale.
 Meanwhile, my hope has been, that I might fetch

Invigorating thoughts from former years;
 Might fix the wavering balance of my mind,
 And haply meet reproaches too, whose power
 May spur me on, in manhood now mature
 To honourable toil. Yet should these hopes
 Prove vain, and thus should neither I be taught
 To understand myself, nor thou to know
 With better knowledge how the heart was
 framed

Of him thou lovest; need I dread from thee
 Harsh judgments, if the song be loth to quit
 Those recollected hours that have the charm
 Of visionary things, those lovely forms
 And sweet sensations that throw back our life,
 And almost make remotest infancy
 A visible scene, on which the sun is shining?

One end at least hath been attained; my mind
 Hath been revived, and if this genial mood
 Desert me not, forthwith shall be brought down
 Through later years the story of my life.
 The road lies plain before me;—'tis a theme
 Single and of determined bounds; and hence
 I choose it rather at this time, than work
 Of ampler or more varied argument,
 Where I might be discomfited and lost:
 And certain hopes are with me, that to thee
 This labour will be welcome, honoured Friend!

BOOK SECOND.

SCHOOL-TIME.

CONTINUED.

Thus far, O Friend! have we, though leaving much
 Unvisited, endeavoured to retrace
 The simple ways in which my childhood walked;
 Those chiefly that first led me to the love
 Of rivers, woods, and fields. The passion yet
 As in its birth, sustained as might befall
 By nourishment that came unsought; for still
 From week to week, from month to month, we
 Lived
 In a round of tumult. Duly were our games
 Prolonged in summer till the day-light failed:
 No chair remained before the doors; the bench
 And threshold steps were empty; fast asleep
 The labourer, and the old man who had sate

A later lingerer; yet the revelry
 Continued and the loud uproar: at last,
 When all the ground was dark, and twinkling stars
 Edged the black clouds, home and to bed we went,
 Feverish with weary joints and beating minds.
 Ah! is there one who ever has been young,
 Nor needs a warning voice to tame the pride
 Of intellect and virtue's self-esteem?
 One is there, though the wisest and the best
 Of all mankind, who covets not at times
 Union that cannot be;—who would not give
 If so he might, to duty and to truth
 The eagerness of infantine desire?
 A tranquillising spirit presses now
 On my corporeal frame, so wide appears
 The vacancy between me and those days
 Which yet have such self-presence in my mind,

That, musing on them, often do I seem
 Two consciousnesses, conscious of myself
 And of some other Being. A rude mass
 Of native rock, left midway in the square
 Of our small market village, was the goal
 Or centre of these sports; and when, returned
 After long absence, thither I repaired,
 Gone was the old grey stone, and in its place
 A smart Assembly-room usurped the ground
 That had been ours. There let the fiddle scream,
 And be ye happy! Yet, my Friends! I know
 That more than one of you will think with me
 Of those soft starry nights, and that old Dame
 From whom the stone was named, who there had
 sate,

And watched her table with its huckster's wares
 Assiduous, through the length of sixty years.

We ran a boisterous course; the year span round
 With giddy motion. But the time approached
 That brought with it a regular desire
 For calmer pleasures, when the winning forms
 Of Nature were collaterally attached
 To every scheme of holiday delight
 And every boyish sport, less grateful else
 And languidly pursued.

When summer came,

Our pastime was, on bright half-holidays,
 To sweep along the plain of Windermere
 With rival oars; and the selected bourne
 Was now an Island musical with birds
 That sang and ceased not; now a Sister Isle
 Beneath the oaks' umbrageous covert, sown
 With lilies of the valley like a field;
 And now a third small Island, where survived
 In solitude the ruins of a shrine
 Once to Our Lady dedicate, and served
 Daily with chaunted rites. In such a race
 So ended, disappointment could be none,
 Uneasiness, or pain, or jealousy:
 We rested in the shade, all pleased alike,
 Conquered and conqueror. Thus the pride of
 strength,

And the vain-glory of superior skill,
 Were tempered; thus was gradually produced
 A quiet independence of the heart;
 And to my Friend who knows me I may add,
 Fearless of blame, that hence for future days
 Ensued a diffidence and modesty,
 And I was taught to feel, perhaps too much,
 The self-sufficing power of Solitude.

Our daily meals were frugal, Sabine fare!
 More than we wished we knew the blessing then

Of vigorous hunger—hence corporeal strength
 Unsapped by delicate viands; for, exclude
 A little weekly stipend, and we lived
 Through three divisions of the quartered year
 In penniless poverty. But now to school
 From the half-yearly holidays returned,
 We came with weightier purses, that sufficed
 To furnish treats more costly than the Dame
 Of the old grey stone, from her scant board
 supplied.

Hence rustic dinners on the cool green ground,
 Or in the woods, or by a river side.
 Or shady fountains, while among the leaves
 Soft airs were stirring, and the mid-day sun
 Unfelt shone brightly round us in our joy.
 Nor is my aim neglected if I tell
 How sometimes, in the length of those half-years
 We from our funds drew largely;—proud to curl
 And eager to spur on, the galloping steed;
 And with the courteous inn-keeper, whose stud
 Supplied our want, we haply might employ
 Sly subterfuge, if the adventure's bound
 Were distant: some famed temple where of yore
 The Druids worshipped, or the antique walls
 Of that large abbey, where within the Vale
 Of Nightshade, to St. Mary's honour built,
 Stands yet a mouldering pile with fractured arches,
 Belfry, and images, and living trees;
 A holy scene!—Along the smooth green turf
 Our horses grazed. To more than inland peace,
 Left by the west wind sweeping overhead
 From a tumultuous ocean, trees and towers
 In that sequestered valley may be seen,
 Both silent and both motionless alike;
 Such the deep shelter that is there, and such
 The safeguard for repose and quietness.

Our steeds remounted and the summons given
 With whip and spur we through the chauntry flew
 In uncouth race, and left the cross-legged knight
 And the stone-abbot, and that single wren
 Which one day sang so sweetly in the nave
 Of the old church, that—though from recent
 showers

The earth was comfortless, and, touched by fair
 Internal breezes, sobbings of the place
 And respirations, from the roofless walls
 The shuddering ivy dripped large drops—yet still
 So sweetly 'mid the gloom the invisible bird
 Sang to herself, that there I could have made
 My dwelling-place, and lived for ever there
 To hear such music. Through the walls we flew
 And down the valley, and, a circuit made
 In wantonness of heart, through rough and smooth

We scampered homewards. Oh, ye rocks and streams,
And that still spirit shed from evening air !
Even in this joyous time I sometimes felt
Your presence, when with slackened step we
breathed

Along the sides of the steep hills, or when
Lighted by gleams of moonlight from the sea
We beat with thundering hoofs the level sand.

Midway on long Winander's eastern shore,
Within the crescent of a pleasant bay,
A tavern stood ; no homely-featured house,
Primeval like its neighbouring cottages,
But 'twas a splendid place, the door beset
With chaises, grooms, and liveries, and within
Decanters, glasses, and the blood-red wine.
In ancient times, and ere the Hall was built
On the large island, had this dwelling been
More worthy of a poet's love, a hut,
Proud of its own bright fire and sycamore shade.
But—though the rhymes were gone that once
inscribed

The threshold, and large golden characters,
Spread o'er the spangled sign-board, had dislodged
The old Lion and usurped his place, in slight
And mockery of the rustic painter's hand—
Yet, to this hour, the spot to me is dear
With all its foolish pomp. The garden lay
Upon a slope surmounted by a plain
Of a small bowling-green ; beneath us stood
A grove, with gleams of water through the trees
And over the tree-tops ; nor did we want
Refreshment, strawberries and mellow cream.
There, while through half an afternoon we played
On the smooth platform, whether skill prevailed
Or happy blunder triumphed, bursts of glee
Made all the mountains ring. But, ere night-fall,
When in our pinnace we returned at leisure
Over the shadowy lake, and to the beach
Of some small island steered our course with one,
The Minstrel of the Troop, and left him there,
And rowed off gently, while he blew his flute
Alone upon the rock—oh, then, the calm
And dead still water lay upon my mind
Even with a weight of pleasure, and the sky,
Never before so beautiful, sank down
Into my heart, and held me like a dream !
Thus were my sympathies enlarged, and thus
Daily the common range of visible things
Grew dear to me : already I began
To love the sun ; a boy I loved the sun,
Not as I since have loved him, as a pledge
And surety of our earthly life, a light

Which we behold and feel we are alive ;
Nor for his bounty to so many worlds—
But for this cause, that I had seen him lay
His beauty on the morning hills, had seen
The western mountain touch his setting orb,
In many a thoughtless hour, when, from excess
Of happiness, my blood appeared to flow
For its own pleasure, and I breathed with joy.
And, from like feelings, humble though intense,
To patriotic and domestic love
Analogous, the moon to me was dear ;
For I could dream away my purposes,
Standing to gaze upon her while she hung
Midway between the hills, as if she knew
No other region, but belonged to thee,
Yea, appertained by a peculiar right
To thee and thy grey huts, thou one dear Vale !

Those incidental charms which first attached
My heart to rural objects, day by day
Grew weaker, and I hasten on to tell
How Nature, intervenient till this time
And secondary, now at length was sought
For her own sake. But who shall parcel out
His intellect by geometric rules,
Split like a province into round and square ?
Who knows the individual hour in which
His habits were first sown, even as a seed ?
Who that shall point as with a wand and say
" This portion of the river of my mind
Came from yon fountain ? " Thou, my Friend !
art one

More deeply read in thy own thoughts ; to thee
Science appears but what in truth she is,
Not as our glory and our absolute boast,
But as a succedaneum, and a prop
To our infirmity. No officious slave
Art thou of that false secondary power
By which we multiply distinctions, then
Deem that our puny boundaries are things
That we perceive, and not that we have made.
To thee, unblinded by these formal arts,
The unity of all hath been revealed,
And thou wilt doubt, with me less aptly skilled
Than many are to range the faculties
In scale and order, class the cabinet
Of their sensations, and in voluble phrase
Run through the history and birth of each
As of a single independent thing.
Hard task, vain hope, to analyse the mind,
If each most obvious and particular thought,
Not in a mystical and idle sense,
But in the words of Reason deeply weighed,
Hath no beginning.

Blest the infant Babe,
 (For with my best conjecture I would trace
 Our Being's earthly progress,) blest the Babe,
 Nursed in his Mother's arms, who sinks to sleep
 Rocked on his Mother's breast; who with his soul
 Drinks in the feelings of his Mother's eye!
 For him, in one dear Presence, there exists
 A virtue which irradiates and exalts
 Objects through widest intercourse of sense.
 No outcast he, bewildered and depressed:
 Along his infant veins are interfused
 The gravitation and the filial bond
 Of nature that connect him with the world.
 Is there a flower, to which he points with hand
 Too weak to gather it, already love
 Drawn from love's purest earthly fount for him
 Hath beautified that flower; already shades
 Of pity cast from inward tenderness
 Do fall around him upon aught that bears
 Unsightly marks of violence or harm.
 Emphatically such a Being lives,
 Frail creature as he is, helpless as frail,
 An inmate of this active universe:
 For feeling has to him imparted power
 That through the growing faculties of sense
 Doth like an agent of the one great Mind
 Create, creator and receiver both,
 Working but in alliance with the works
 Which it beholds.—Such, verily, is the first
 Poetic spirit of our human life,
 By uniform control of after years,
 In most, abated or suppressed; in some,
 Through every change of growth and of decay,
 Pre-eminent till death.

From early days,
 Beginning not long after that first time
 In which, a Babe, by intercourse of touch
 I held mute dialogues with my Mother's heart,
 I have endeavoured to display the means
 Whereby this infant sensibility,
 Great birthright of our being, was in me
 Augmented and sustained. Yet is a path
 More difficult before me; and I fear
 That in its broken windings we shall need
 The chamois' sinews, and the eagle's wing:
 For now a trouble came into my mind
 From unknown causes. I was left alone
 Seeking the visible world, nor knowing why.
 The props of my affections were removed,
 And yet the building stood, as if sustained
 By its own spirit! All that I beheld
 Was dear, and hence to finer influxes
 The mind lay open to a more exact
 And close communion. Many are our joys

In youth, but oh! what happiness to live
 When every hour brings palpable access
 Of knowledge, when all knowledge is delight,
 And sorrow is not there! The seasons came,
 And every season wheresoe'er I moved
 Unfolded transitory qualities,
 Which, but for this most watchful power of love,
 Had been neglected; left a register
 Of permanent relations, else unknown.
 Hence life, and change, and beauty, solitude
 More active even than "best society"—
 Society made sweet as solitude
 By silent inobtrusive sympathies,
 And gentle agitations of the mind
 From manifold distinctions, difference
 Perceived in things, where, to the unwatchful eye,
 No difference is, and hence, from the same source,
 Sublimar joy; for I would walk alone,
 Under the quiet stars, and at that time
 Have felt whate'er there is of power in sound
 To breathe an elevated mood, by form
 Or image unprofaned; and I would stand,
 If the night blackened with a coming storm,
 Beneath some rock, listening to notes that are
 The ghostly language of the ancient earth,
 Or make their dim abode in distant winds.
 Thence did I drink the visionary power;
 And deem not profitless those fleeting moods
 Of shadowy exultation: not for this,
 That they are kindred to our purer mind
 And intellectual life; but that the soul,
 Remembering how she felt, but what she felt
 Remembering not, retains an obscure sense
 Of possible sublimity, whereto
 With growing faculties she doth aspire,
 With faculties still growing, feeling still
 That whatsoever point they gain, they yet
 Have something to pursue.

And not alone,
 'Mid gloom and tumult, but no less 'mid fair
 And tranquil scenes, that universal power
 And fitness in the latent qualities
 And essences of things, by which the mind
 Is moved with feelings of delight, to me
 Came strengthened with a superadded soul,
 A virtue not its own. My morning walks
 Were early;—oft before the hours of school
 I travelled round our little lake, five miles
 Of pleasant wandering. Happy time! more dear
 For this, that one was by my side, a Friend.*
 Then passionately loved; with heart how full

* The late Rev. John Fleming, of Rayrigg, Winder-
 mere.—Ed.

Would he peruse these lines! For many years
 Have since flowed in between us, and, our minds
 Both silent to each other, at this time
 We live as if those hours had never been.
 Nor seldom did I lift our cottage latch
 Far earlier, ere one smoke-wreath had risen
 From human dwelling, or the vernal shrub
 Was audible; and sate among the woods
 Alone upon some jutting eminence,
 At the first gleam of dawn-light, when the Vale,
 Yet slumbering, lay in utter solitude.
 How shall I seek the origin? where find
 Faith in the marvellous things which then I felt?
 Oft in these moments such a holy calm
 Would overspread my soul, that bodily eyes
 Were utterly forgotten, and what I saw
 Appeared like something in myself, a dream,
 A prospect in the mind.

'Twere long to tell

What spring and autumn, what the winter snows,
 And what the summer shade, what day and night,
 Evening and morning, sleep and waking, thought
 From sources inexhaustible, poured forth
 To feed the spirit of religious love
 In which I walked with Nature. But let this
 Be not forgotten, that I still retained
 My first creative sensibility;
 That by the regular action of the world
 My soul was unsubdued. A plastic power
 Abode with me; a forming hand, at times
 Rebellious, acting in a devious mood;
 A local spirit of his own, at war
 With general tendency, but, for the most,
 Subservient strictly to external things
 With which it communed. An auxiliary light
 Came from my mind, which on the setting sun
 Bestowed new splendour; the melodious birds,
 The fluttering breezes, fountains that run on
 Murmuring so sweetly in themselves, obeyed
 A like dominion, and the midnight storm
 Grew darker in the presence of my eye:
 Hence my obeisance, my devotion hence,
 And hence my transport.

Nor should this, perchance,
 Pass unrecorded, that I still had loved
 The exercise and produce of a toil,
 Than analytic industry to me
 More pleasing, and whose character I deem
 Is more poetic as resembling more
 Creative agency. The song would speak
 Of that interminable building reared
 By observation of affinities
 In objects where no brotherhood exists
 To passive minds. My seventeenth year was come;

And, whether from this habit rooted now
 So deeply in my mind, or from excess
 In the great social principle of life
 Coercing all things into sympathy,
 To unorganic natures were transferred
 My own enjoyments; or the power of truth
 Coming in revelation, did converse
 With things that really are; I, at this time,
 Saw blessings spread around me like a sea.
 Thus while the days flew by, and years passed on,
 From Nature and her overflowing soul,
 I had received so much, that all my thoughts
 Were steeped in feeling; I was only then
 Contented, when with bliss ineffable
 I felt the sentiment of Being spread
 O'er all that moves and all that seemeth still;
 O'er all that, lost beyond the reach of thought
 And human knowledge, to the human eye
 Invisible, yet liveth to the heart;
 O'er all that leaps and runs, and shouts and sings,
 Or beats the gladsome air; o'er all that glides
 Beneath the wave, yea, in the wave itself,
 And mighty depth of waters. Wonder not
 If high the transport, great the joy I felt,
 Communing in this sort through earth and heaven
 With every form of creature, as it looked
 Towards the Uncreated with a countenance
 Of adoration, with an eye of love.
 One song they sang, and it was audible,
 Most audible, then, when the fleshly ear,
 O'ercome by humblest prelude of that strain,
 Forgot her functions, and slept undisturbed.

If this be error, and another faith
 Find easier access to the pious mind,
 Yet were I grossly destitute of all
 Those human sentiments that make this earth
 So dear, if I should fail with grateful voice
 To speak of you, ye mountains, and ye lakes
 And sounding cataracts, ye mists and winds
 That dwell among the hills where I was born.
 If in my youth I have been pure in heart,
 If, mingling with the world, I am content
 With my own modest pleasures, and have lived
 With God and Nature communing, removed
 From little enmities and low desires,
 The gift is yours; if in these times of fear,
 This melancholy waste of hopes o'erthrown,
 If, 'mid indifference and apathy,
 And wicked exultation when good men
 On every side fall off, we know not how,
 To selfishness, disguised in gentle names
 Of peace and quiet and domestic love,
 Yet mingled not unwillingly with sneers

On visionary minds ; if, in this time
 Of dereliction and dismay, I yet
 Despair not of our nature, but retain
 A more than Roman confidence, a faith
 That fails not, in all sorrow my support,
 The blessing of my life ; the gift is yours,
 Ye winds and sounding cataracts ! 'tis yours,
 Ye mountains ! thine, O Nature ! Thou hast fed
 My lofty speculations ; and in thee,
 For this uneasy heart of ours, I find
 A never-failing principle of joy
 And purest passion.

Thou, my Friend ! wert reared
 In the great city, 'mid far other scenes ;
 But we, by different roads, at length have gained
 The self same bourne. And for this cause to thee
 I speak, unapprehensive of contempt,

The insinuated scoff of coward tongues,
 And all that silent language which so oft
 In conversation between man and man
 Blots from the human countenance all trace
 Of beauty and of love. For thou hast sought
 The truth in solitude, and, since the days
 That gave thee liberty, full long desired,
 To serve in Nature's temple, thou hast been
 The most assiduous of her ministers ;
 In many things my brother, chiefly here
 In this our deep devotion.

Fare thee well !

Health and the quiet of a healthful mind
 Attend thee ! seeking oft the haunts of men,
 And yet more often living with thyself,
 And for thyself, so haply shall thy days
 Be many, and a blessing to mankind.

BOOK THIRD

RESIDENCE AT CAMBRIDGE.

It was a dreary morning when the wheels
 Rolled over a wide plain o'erhung with clouds,
 And nothing cheered our way till first we saw
 The long-roofed chapel of King's College lift
 Turrets and pinnacles in answering files,
 Extended high above a dusky grove.

Advancing, we espied upon the road
 A student clothed in gown and tasselled cap,
 Striding along as if o'ertasked by Time,
 Or covetous of exercise and air ;
 He passed—nor was I master of my eyes
 Till he was left an arrow's flight behind.
 As near and nearer to the spot we drew,
 It seemed to suck us in with an eddy's force.
 Onward we drove beneath the Castle ; caught,
 While crossing Magdalene Bridge, a glimpse of
 Cam ;
 And at the *Hoop* alighted, famous Inn.

My spirit was up, my thoughts were full of
 hope ;
 Some friends I had, acquaintances who there
 Seemed friends, poor simple school-boys, now
 hung round

With honour and importance : in a world
 Of welcome faces up and down I roved ;
 Questions, directions, warnings and advice,
 Flowed in upon me, from all sides ; fresh day
 Of pride and pleasure ! to myself I seemed
 A man of business and expense, and went
 From shop to shop about my own affairs,
 To Tutor or to Tailor, as befel,
 From street to street with loose and careless mind.

I was the Dreamer, they the Dream ; I roamed
 Delighted through the motley spectacle ;
 Gowns grave, or gaudy, doctors, students, streets,
 Courts, cloisters, flocks of churches, gateways,
 towers :
 Migration strange for a stripling of the hills,
 A northern villager.

As if the change
 Had waited on some Fairy's wand, at once
 Behold me rich in monies, and attired
 In splendid garb, with hose of silk, and hair
 Powdered like rimy trees, when frost is keen.
 My lordly dressing-gown, I pass it by,
 With other signs of manhood that supplied
 The lack of beard.—The weeks went roundly on,
 With invitations, suppers, wine and fruit,
 Smooth housekeeping within, and all without
 Liberal, and suiting gentleman's array.

The Evangelist St. John my patron was :
 Three Gothic courts are his, and in the first
 Was my abiding-place, a nook obscure ;
 Right underneath, the College kitchens made
 A humming sound, less tuneable than bees,
 But hardly less industrious ; with shrill notes
 Of sharp command and scolding intermixed.
 Near me hung Trinity's loquacious clock,
 Who never let the quarters, night or day,
 Slip by him unproclaimed, and told the hours
 Twice over with a male and female voice.
 Her pealing organ was my neighbour too ;
 And from my pillow, looking forth by light
 Of moon or favouring stars, I could behold
 The antechapel where the statue stood
 Of Newton with his prism and silent face,
 The marble index of a mind for ever
 Voyaging through strange seas of Thought, alone.

Of College labours, of the Lecturer's room
 All studded round, as thick as chairs could stand,
 With loyal students, faithful to their books,
 Half-and-half idlers, hardy recusants,
 And honest dunces—of important days,
 Examinations, when the man was weighed
 As in a balance ! of excessive hopes,
 Tremblings withal and commendable fears,
 Small jealousies, and triumphs good or bad—
 Let others that know more speak as they know.
 Such glory was but little sought by me,
 And little won. Yet from the first crude days
 Of settling time in this untried abode,
 I was disturbed at times by prudent thoughts,
 Wishing to hope without a hope, some fears
 About my future worldly maintenance,
 And, more than all, a strangeness in the mind,
 A feeling that I was not for that hour,
 Nor for that place. But wherefore be cast down ?
 For (not to speak of Reason and her pure
 Reflective acts to fix the moral law
 Deep in the conscience, nor of Christian Hope,
 Bowing her head before her sister Faith
 As one far mightier), hither I had come,
 Bear witness Truth, endowed with holy powers
 And faculties, whether to work or feel.
 Oft when the dazzling show no longer new
 Had ceased to dazzle, oftimes did I quit
 My comrades, leave the crowd, buildings and
 groves,
 And as I paced alone the level fields
 Far from those lovely sights and sounds sublime
 With which I had been conversant, the mind
 Drooped not ; but there into herself returning,
 With prompt rebound seemed fresh as heretofore.

At least I more distinctly recognised
 Her native instincts : let me dare to speak
 A higher language, say that now I felt
 What independent solaces were mine,
 To mitigate the injurious sway of place
 Or circumstance, how far soever changed
 In youth, or to be changed in after years.
 As if awakened, summoned, roused, constrained,
 I looked for universal things ; perused
 The common countenance of earth and sky :
 Earth, nowhere unembellished by some trace
 Of that first Paradise whence man was driven ;
 And sky, whose beauty and bounty are expressed
 By the proud name she bears—the name of
 Heaven.

I called on both to teach me what they might ;
 Or turning the mind in upon herself
 Pored, watched, expected, listened, spread my
 thoughts

And spread them with a wider creeping ; felt
 Incumbencies more awful, visitings
 Of the Upholder of the tranquil soul,
 That tolerates the indignities of Time,
 And, from the centre of Eternity
 All finite motions overruling, lives
 In glory immutable. But peace ! enough
 Here to record that I was mounting now
 To such community with highest truth—
 A track pursuing, not untrod before,
 From strict analogies by thought supplied
 Or consciousnesses not to be subdued.
 To every natural form, rock, fruit or flower,
 Even the loose stones that cover the high-way,
 I gave a moral life : I saw them feel,
 Or linked them to some feeling : the great mass
 Lay bedded in a quickening soul, and all
 That I beheld respired with inward meaning.
 Add that whate'er of Terror or of Love
 Or Beauty, Nature's daily face put on
 From transitory passion, unto this
 I was as sensitive as waters are
 To the sky's influence in a kindred mood
 Of passion ; was obedient as a lute
 That waits upon the touches of the wind.
 Unknown, unthought of, yet I was most rich—
 I had a world about me—'twas my own ;
 I made it, for it only lived to me,
 And to the God who sees into the heart.
 Such sympathies, though rarely, were betrayed
 By outward gestures and by visible looks :
 Some called it madness—so indeed it was,
 If child-like fruitfulness in passing joy,
 If steady moods of thoughtfulness matured
 To inspiration, sort with such a name ;

If prophecy be madness ; if things viewed
 By poets in old time, and higher up
 By the first men, earth's first inhabitants,
 May in these tutored days no more be seen
 With undisordered sight. But leaving this,
 It was no madness, for the bodily eye
 Amid my strongest workings evermore
 Was searching out the lines of difference
 As they lie hid in all external forms,
 Near or remote, minute or vast ; an eye
 Which, from a tree, a stone, a withered leaf,
 To the broad ocean and the azure heavens
 Spangled with kindred multitudes of stars,
 Could find no surface where its power might
 sleep ;
 Which spake perpetual logic to my soul,
 And by an unrelenting agency
 Did bind my feelings even as in a chain.

And here, O Friend ! have I retraced my life
 Up to an eminence, and told a tale
 Of matters which not falsely may be called
 The glory of my youth. Of genius, power,
 Creation and divinity itself
 I have been speaking, for my theme has been
 What passed within me. Not of outward things
 Done visibly for other minds, words, signs,
 Symbols or actions, but of my own heart
 Have I been speaking, and my youthful mind.
 O Heavens ! how awful is the might of souls,
 And what they do within themselves while yet
 The yoke of earth is new to them, the world
 Nothing but a wild field where they were sown.
 This is, in truth, heroic argument,
 This genuine prowess, which I wished to touch
 With hand however weak, but in the main
 It lies far hidden from the reach of words.
 Points have we all of us within our souls
 Where all stand single ; this I feel, and make
 Breathings for incommunicable powers ;
 But is not each a memory to himself,
 And, therefore, now that we must quit this theme,
 I am not heartless, for there's not a man
 That lives who hath not known his god-like hours,
 And feels not what an empire we inherit
 As natural beings in the strength of Nature.

No more : for now into a populous plain
 We must descend. A Traveller I am,
 Whose tale is only of himself ; even so,
 So be it, if the pure of heart be prompt
 To follow, and if thou, my honoured Friend !
 Who in these thoughts art ever at my side,
 Support, as heretofore, my fainting steps.

It hath been told, that when the first delight
 That flashed upon me from this novel show
 Had failed, the mind returned into herself ;
 Yet true it is, that I had made a change
 In climate, and my nature's outward coat
 Changed also slowly and insensibly.
 Full oft the quiet and exalted thoughts
 Of loneliness gave way to empty noise
 And superficial pastimes ; now and then
 Forced labour, and more frequently forced hopes ;
 And, worst of all, a treasonable growth
 Of indecisive judgments, that impaired
 And shook the mind's simplicity.—And yet
 This was a gladsome time. Could I behold—
 Who, less insensible than sodden clay
 In a sea-river's bed at ebb of tide,
 Could have beheld,—with undelighted heart,
 So many happy youths, so wide and fair
 A congregation in its budding-time
 Of health, and hope, and beauty, all at once
 So many divers samples from the growth
 Of life's sweet season—could have seen unmoved
 That miscellaneous garland of wild flowers
 Decking the matron temples of a place
 So famous through the world ? To me, at least,
 It was a goodly prospect : for, in sooth,
 Though I had learnt betimes to stand unproped,
 And independent musings pleased me so
 That spells seemed on me when I was alone,
 Yet could I only cleave to solitude
 In lonely places ; if a throng was near
 That way I leaned by nature ; for my heart
 Was social, and loved idleness and joy.

Not seeking those who might participate
 My deeper pleasures (nay, I had not once,
 Though not unused to mutter lonesome songs,
 Even with myself divided such delight,
 Or looked that way for aught that might be clothed
 In human language), easily I passed
 From the remembrances of better things,
 And slipped into the ordinary works
 Of careless youth, unburthened, unalarmed.
Caverns there were within my mind which sun
 Could never penetrate, yet did there not
 Want store of leafy *arbores* where the light
 Might enter in at will. Companionships,
 Friendships, acquaintances, were welcome all.
 We sauntered, played, or rioted ; we talked
 Unprofitable talk at morning hours ;
 Drifted about along the streets and walks,
 Read lazily in trivial books, went forth
 To gallop through the country in blind zeal
 Of senseless horsemanship, or on the breast

Of Cam sailed boisterously, and let the stars
Come forth, perhaps without one quiet thought.

Such was the tenor of the second act
In this new life. Imagination slept,
And yet not utterly. I could not print
Ground where the grass had yielded to the steps
Of generations of illustrious men,
Unmoved. I could not always lightly pass
Through the same gateways, sleep where they had
slept,

Wake where they waked, range that inclosure old,
That garden of great intellects, undisturbed.
Place also by the side of this dark sense
Of noble feeling, that those spiritual men,
Even the great Newton's own ethereal self,
Seemed humbled in these precincts thence to be
The more endeared. Their several memories here
(Even like their persons in their portraits clothed
With the accustomed garb of daily life)
Put on a lowly and a touching grace
Of more distinct humanity, that left
All genuine admiration unimpaired.

Beside the pleasant Mill of Trompington
I laughed with Chaucer in the hawthorn shade ;
Heard him, while birds were warbling, tell his tales
Of amorous passion. And that gentle Bard,
Chosen by the Muses for their Page of State—
Sweet Spenser, moving through his clouded
heaven

With the moon's beauty and the moon's soft pace,
I called him Brother, Englishman, and Friend !
Yea, our blind Poet, who in his later day,
Stood almost single ; uttering odious truth—
Darkness before, and danger's voice behind,
Soul awful—if the earth has ever lodged
An awful soul—I seemed to see him here
Familiarly, and in his scholar's dress
Sounding before me, yet a stripling youth—
A boy, no better, with his rosy cheeks
Angelic, keen eye, courageous look,
And conscious step of purity and pride.
Among the band of my compeers was one
Whom chance had stationed in the very room
Honoured by Milton's name. O temperate Bard !
Be it confessed that, for the first time, seated
Within thy innocent lodge and oratory,
One of a festive circle, I poured out
Libations, to thy memory drank, till pride
And gratitude grew dizzy in a brain
Never excited by the fumes of wine
Before that hour, or since. Then, forth I ran
From the assembly ; through a length of streets,

Ran, ostrich-like, to reach our chapel door
In not a desperate or opprobrious time,
Albeit long after the importunate bell
Had stopped, with wearisome Cassandra voice
No longer haunting the dark winter night.
Call back, O Friend ! a moment to thy mind,
The place itself and fashion of the rites.
With careless ostentation shouldering up
My surplice, through the inferior throng I clove
Of the plain Burghers, who in audience stood
On the last skirts of their permitted ground,
Under the pealing organ. Empty thoughts !
I am ashamed of them : and that great Bard,
And thou, O Friend ! who in thy ample mind
Hast placed me high above my best deserts,
Ye will forgive the weakness of that hour,
In some of its unworthy vanities,
Brother to many more.

In this mixed sort
The months passed on, remissly, not given up
To wilful alienation from the right,
Or walks of open scandal, but in vague
And loose indifference, easy likings, aims
Of a low pitch—duty and zeal dismissed,
Yet Nature, or a happy course of things
Not doing in their stead the needful work.
The memory languidly revolved, the heart
Reposed in noontide rest, the inner pulse
Of contemplation almost failed to beat.
Such life might not inaptly be compared
To a floating island, an amphibious spot
Unsound, of spongy texture, yet withal
Not wanting a fair face of water weeds
And pleasant flowers. The thirst of living praise,
Fit reverence for the glorious Dead, the sight
Of those long vistas, sacred catacombs,
Where mighty *minds* lie visibly entombed,
Have often stirred the heart of youth, and bred
A fervent love of rigorous discipline.—
Alas ! such high emotion touched not me.
Look was there none within these walls to shame
My easy spirits, and discountenance
• Their light composure, far less to instil
A calm resolve of mind, firmly addressed
To puissant efforts. Nor was this the blame
Of others but my own ; I should, in truth,
As far as doth concern my single self,
Misdeem most widely, lodging it elsewhere :
For I, bred up 'mid Nature's luxuries,
Was a spoiled child, and, rambling like the wind,
As I had done in daily intercourse
With those crystalline rivers, solemn heights,
And mountains, ranging like a fowl of the air,
I was ill-tutored for captivity ;

To quit my pleasure, and, from month to month,
 Take up a station calmly on the perch
 Of sedentary peace. Those lovely forms
 Had also left less space within my mind,
 Which, wrought upon instinctively, had found
 A freshness in those objects of her love,
 A winning power, beyond all other power.
 Not that I slighted books,—that were to lack
 All sense,—but other passions in me ruled,
 Passions more fervent, making me less prompt
 To in-door study than was wise or well,
 Or suited to those years. Yet I, though used
 In magisterial liberty to rove,
 Culling such flowers of learning as might tempt
 A random choice, could shadow forth a place
 (If now I yield not to a flattering dream)
 Whose studious aspect should have bent me
 down

To instantaneous service; should at once
 Have made me pay to science and to arts
 And written lore, acknowledged my liege lord,
 A homage frankly offered up, like that
 Which I had paid to Nature. Toil and pains
 In this recess, by thoughtful Fancy built,
 Should spread from heart to heart; and stately
 groves,

Majestic edifices, should not want
 A corresponding dignity within.
 The congregating temper that pervades
 Our unripe years, not wasted, should be taught
 To minister to works of high attempt—
 Works which the enthusiast would perform with
 love.

Youth should be awed, religiously possessed
 With a conviction of the power that waits
 On knowledge, when sincerely sought and prized
 For its own sake, on glory and on praise
 If but by labour won, and fit to endure
 The passing day; should learn to put aside
 Her trappings here, should strip them off abashed
 Before antiquity and stedfast truth
 And strong book-mindedness; and over all
 A healthy sound simplicity should reign,
 A seemly plainness, name it what you will,
 Republican or pious.

If these thoughts
 Are a gratuitous emblazonry
 That mocks the recreant age *we* live in, then
 Be Folly and False-seeming free to affect
 Whatever formal gait of discipline
 Shall raise them highest in their own esteem—
 Let them parade among the Schools at will,
 But spare the House of God. Was ever known
 The witless shepherd who persists to drive

A flock that thirsts not to a pool disliked?
 A weight must surely hang on days begun
 And ended with such mockery. Be wise,
 Ye Presidents and Deans, and, till the spirit
 Of ancient times revive, and youth be trained
 At home in pious service, to your bells
 Give seasonable rest, for 'tis a sound
 Hollow as ever vexed the tranquil air;
 And your officious doings bring disgrace
 On the plain steeples of our English Church,
 Whose worship, 'mid remotest village trees,
 Suffers for this. Even Science, too, at hand
 In daily sight of this irreverence,
 Is smitten thence with an unnatural taint,
 Loses her just authority, falls beneath
 Collateral suspicion, else unknown.
 This truth escaped me not, and I confess,
 That having 'mid my native hills given loose
 To a schoolboy's vision, I had raised a pile
 Upon the basis of the coming time,
 That fell in ruins round me. Oh, what joy
 To see a sanctuary for our country's youth
 Informed with such a spirit as might be
 Its own protection; a primeval grove,
 Where, though the shades with cheerfulness were
 filled,

Nor indigent of songs warbled from crowds
 In under-coverts, yet the countenance
 Of the whole place should bear a stamp of awe;
 A habitation sober and demure
 For ruminating creatures; a domain
 For quiet things to wander in; a haunt
 In which the heron should delight to feed
 By the shy rivers, and the pelican
 Upon the cypress spire in lonely thought
 Might sit and sun himself.—Alas! Alas!
 In vain for such solemnity I looked;
 Mine eyes were crossed by butterflies, ears vexed
 By chattering popinjays; the inner heart
 Seemed trivial, and the impresses without
 Of a too gaudy region.

Different sight

Those venerable Doctors saw of old,
 When all who dwelt within these famous walls
 Led in abstemiousness a studious life;
 When, in forlorn and naked chambers cooped
 And crowded, o'er the ponderous books they hung
 Like caterpillars eating out their way
 In silence, or with keen devouring noise
 Not to be tracked or fathered. Princes then
 At matins froze, and couched at curfew-time,
 Trained up through piety and zeal to prize
 Spare diet, patient labour, and plain weeds.
 O seat of Arts! renowned throughout the world!

Far different service in those homely days
 The Muses' modest nurslings underwent
 From their first childhood : in that glorious time
 When Learning, like a stranger come from far,
 Sounding through Christian lands her trumpet,
 roused
 Peasant and king ; when boys and youths, the
 growth
 Of ragged villages and crazy huts,
 Forsook their homes, and, errant in the quest
 Of Patron, famous school or friendly nook,
 Where, pensioned, they in shelter might sit down,
 From town to town and through wide scattered
 realms
 Journeyed with ponderous folios in their hands ;
 And often, starting from some covert place,
 Saluted the chance comer on the road,
 Crying, "An obolus, a penny give
 To a poor scholar !"—when illustrious men,
 Lovers of truth, by penury constrained,
 Bucer, Erasmus, or Melancthon, read
 Before the doors or windows of their cells
 By moonshine through mere lack of taper light.

But peace to vain regrets ! We see but darkly
 Even when we look behind us, and best things
 Are not so pure by nature that they needs
 Must keep to all, as fondly all believe,
 Their highest promise. If the mariner,
 When at reluctant distance he hath passed
 Some tempting island, could but know the ills
 That must have fallen upon him had he brought
 His bark to land upon the wished-for shore,
 Good cause would oft be his to thank the surf
 Whose white belt scared him thence, or wind that
 blew
 Inexorably adverse : for myself
 Grieve not ; happy is the gowned youth,
 Who only misses what I missed, who falls
 No lower than I fell.

I did not love,
 Judging not ill perhaps, the timid course
 Of our scholastic studies ; could have wished
 To see the river flow with ampler range
 And freer pace ; but more, far more, I grieved
 To see displayed among an eager few,
 Who in the field of contest persevered,
 Passions unworthy of youth's generous heart
 And mounting spirit, pitiably repaid,
 When so disturbed, whatever palms are won.
 From these I turned to travel with the shoal
 Of more unthinking natures, easy minds
 And pillow ; yet not wanting love that makes
 The day pass lightly on, when foresight sleeps,

And wisdom and the pledges interchanged
 With our own inner being are forgot.

Yet was this deep vacation not given up
 To utter waste. Hitherto I had stood
 In my own mind remote from social life,
 (At least from what we commonly so name,)
 Like a lone shepherd on a promontory
 Who lacking occupation looks far forth
 Into the boundless sea, and rather makes
 Than finds what he beholds. And sure it is,
 That this first transit from the smooth delights
 And wild outlandish walks of simple youth
 To something that resembles an approach
 Towards human business, to a privileged world
 Within a world, a midway residence
 With all its intervenient imagery,
 Did better suit my visionary mind,
 Far better, than to have been bolted forth,
 Thrust out abruptly into Fortune's way
 Among the conflicts of substantial life ;
 By a more just gradation did lead on
 To higher things ; more naturally matured,
 For permanent possession, better fruits,
 Whether of truth or virtue, to ensue.
 In serious mood, but oftener, I confess,
 With playful zest of fancy, did we note
 (How could we less ?) the manners and the ways
 Of those who lived distinguished by the badge
 Of good or ill report ; or those with whom
 By frame of Academic discipline
 We were perforce connected, men whose sway
 And known authority of office served
 To set our minds on edge, and did no more.
 Nor wanted we rich pastime of this kind,
 Found everywhere, but chiefly in the ring
 Of the grave Elders, men unscoured, grotesque
 In character, tricked out like aged trees
 Which through the lapse of their infirmity
 Give ready place to any random seed
 That chooses to be reared upon their trunks.

Here on my view, confronting vividly
 Those shepherd swains whom I had lately left,
 Appeared a different aspect of old age ;
 How different ! yet both distinctly marked,
 Objects embossed to catch the general eye,
 Or portraitures for special use designed,
 As some might seem, so aptly do they serve
 To illustrate Nature's book of rudiments—
 That book upheld as with maternal care
 When she would enter on her tender scheme
 Of teaching comprehension with delight,
 And mingling playful with pathetic thoughts.

The surfaces of artificial life
 And manners finely wrought, the delicate race
 Of colours, lurking, gleaming up and down
 Through that state arras woven with silk and gold;
 This wily interchange of snaky hues,
 Willingly or unwillingly revealed,
 I neither knew nor cared for; and as such
 Were wanting here, I took what might be found
 Of less elaborate fabric. At this day
 I smile, in many a mountain solitude
 Conjuring up scenes as obsolete in freaks
 Of character, in points of wit as broad,
 As aught by wooden images performed
 For entertainment of the gaping crowd
 At wake or fair. And oftentimes do fit
 Remembrances before me of old men—
 Old humourists, who have been long in their
 graves,
 And having almost in my mind put off
 Their human names, have into phantoms passed
 Of texture midway between life and books.

I play the loiterer: 'tis enough to note
 That here in dwarf proportions were expressed
 The limbs of the great world; its eager strifes
 Collaterally pourtrayed, as in mock fight,
 A tournament of blows, some hardly dealt
 Though short of mortal combat; and whate'er
 Might in this pageant be supposed to hit
 An artless rustic's notice, this way less,
 More that way, was not wasted upon me—
 And yet the spectacle may well demand
 A more substantial name, no mimic show,
 Itself a living part of a live whole,
 A creek in the vast sea; for, all degrees
 And shapes of spurious fame and short-lived praise
 Here sate in state, and fed with daily alms
 Retainers won away from solid good;
 And here was Labour, his own bond-slave; Hope,

That never set the pains against the prize;
 Idleness halting with his weary clog,
 And poor misguided Shame, and witless Fear,
 And simple Pleasure foraging for Death;
 Honour misplaced, and Dignity astray;
 Feuds, factions, flatteries, enmity, and guile
 Murmuring submission, and bald government,
 (The idol weak as the idolator),
 And Decency and Custom starving Truth,
 And blind Authority beating with his staff
 The child that might have led him; Emptiness
 Followed as of good omen, and meek Worth
 Left to herself unheard of and unknown.

Of these and other kindred notices
 I cannot say what portion is in truth
 The naked recollection of that time,
 And what may rather have been called to life
 By after-meditation. But delight
 That, in an easy temper lulled asleep,
 Is still with Innocence its own reward,
 This was not wanting. Carelessly I roamed
 As through a wide museum from whose stores
 A casual rarity is singled out
 And has its brief perusal, then gives way
 To others, all supplanted in their turn;
 Till 'mid this crowded neighbourhood of things
 That are by nature most unneighbourly,
 The head turns round and cannot right itself;
 And though an aching and a barren sense
 Of gay confusion still be uppermost,
 With few wise longings and but little love,
 Yet to the memory something cleaves at last,
 Whence profit may be drawn in times to come.

Thus in submissive idleness, my Friend!
 The labouring time of autumn, winter, spring,
 Eight months! rolled pleasingly away; the ninth
 Came and returned me to my native hills.

BOOK FOURTH.

SUMMER VACATION.

BRIGHT was the summer's noon when quickening
steps

Followed each other till a dreary moor
Was crossed, a bare ridge clomb, upon whose top
Standing alone, as from a rampart's edge,
Overlooked the bed of Windermere,
Like a vast river, stretching in the sun.
With exultation, at my feet I saw
Lake, islands, promontories, gleaming bays,
A universe of Nature's fairest forms
Proudly revealed with instantaneous burst,
Magnificent, and beautiful, and gay.
I bounded down the hill shouting amain
For the old Ferryman; to the shout the rocks
Replied, and when the Charon of the flood
Had staid his oars, and touched the jutting pier,
I did not step into the well-known boat
Without a cordial greeting. Thence with speed
Up the familiar hill I took my way
Towards that sweet Valley* where I had been
reared;

It was but a short hour's walk, ere veering round
I saw the snow-white church upon her hill
It like a thronèd Lady, sending out
A gracious look all over her domain.
Upon azure smoke betrays the lurking town;
With eager footsteps I advance and reach
The cottage threshold where my journey closed.
I had welcome had I, with some tears, perhaps,
From my old Dame, so kind and motherly,
While she perused me with a parent's pride.
The thoughts of gratitude shall fall like dew
Upon thy grave, good creature! While my heart
On beat never will I forget thy name.
Heaven's blessing be upon thee where thou liest
After thy innocent and busy stir
Thy narrow cares, thy little daily growth
Thy calm enjoyments, after eighty years,
I had more than eighty, of untroubled life,
Childless, yet by the strangers to thy blood
Honoured with little less than filial love.
That joy was mine to see thee once again,
To see and thy dwelling, and a crowd of things
About its narrow precincts all beloved,

And many of them seeming yet my own!
Why should I speak of what a thousand hearts
Have felt, and every man alive can guess?
The rooms, the court, the garden were not left
Long unsaluted, nor the sunny seat
Round the stone table under the dark pine,
Friendly to studious or to festive hours;
Nor that unruly child of mountain birth,
The famous brook, who, soon as he was boxed
Within our garden, found himself at once,
As if by trick insidious and unkind,
Stripped of his voice and left to dimple down
(Without an effort and without a will)
A channel paved by man's officious care.
I looked at him and smiled, and smiled again,
And in the press of twenty thousand thoughts,
"Ha," quoth I, "pretty prisoner, are you there!"
Well might sarcastic Fancy then have whispered,
"An emblem here behold of thy own life;
In its late course of even days with all
Their smooth enthrallment;" but the heart was full,
Too full for that reproach. My aged Dame
Walked proudly at my side: she guided me;
I willing, nay—nay, wishing to be led.
—The face of every neighbour whom I met
Was like a volume to me; some were hailed
Upon the road, some busy at their work,
Unceremonious greetings interchanged
With half the length of a long field between.
Among my schoolfellows I scattered round
Like recognitions, but with some constraint
Attended, doubtless, with a little pride,
But with more shame, for my habiliments,
The transformation wrought by gay attire.
Not less delighted did I take my place
At our domestic table: and, dear Friend!
In this endeavour simply to relate
A Poet's history, may I leave untold
The thankfulness with which I laid me down
In my accustomed bed, more welcome now
Perhaps than if it had been more desired
Or been more often thought of with regret;
That lowly bed whence I had heard the wind
Roar, and the rain beat hard; where I so oft
Had lain awake on summer nights to watch
The moon in splendour couched among the leaves
Of a tall ash, that near our cottage stood;
Had watched her with fixed eyes while to and fro

* Hawkshead.—Ed.

In the dark summit of the waving tree
She rocked with every impulse of the breeze.

Among the favourites whom it pleased me well
To see again, was one by ancient right
Our inmate, a rough terrier of the hills ;
By birth and call of nature pre-ordained
To hunt the badger and unearth the fox
Among the impervious crags, but having been
From youth our own adopted, he had passed
Into a gentler service. And when first
The boyish spirit flagged, and day by day
Along my veins I kindled with the stir,
The fermentation, and the vernal heat
Of poesy, affecting private shades
Like a sick Lover, then this dog was used
To watch me, an attendant and a friend,
Obsequious to my steps early and late,
Though often of such dilatory walk
Tired, and uneasy at the halts I made.
A hundred times when, roving high and low,
I have been harassed with the toil of verse,
Much pains and little progress, and at once
Some lovely Image in the song rose up
Full-formed, like Venus rising from the sea ;
Then have I darted forwards to let loose
My hand upon his back with stormy joy,
Caressing him again and yet again.
And when at evening on the public way
I sauntered, like a river murmuring
And talking to itself when all things else
Are still, the creature trotted on before ;
Such was his custom ; but whene'er he met
A passenger approaching, he would turn
To give me timely notice, and straightway,
Grateful for that admonishment, I hushed
My voice, composed my gait, and, with the air
And mien of one whose thoughts are free, advanced
To give and take a greeting that might save
My name from piteous rumours, such as wait
On men suspected to be crazed in brain.

Those walks well worthy to be prized and
loved—

Regretted !—that word, too, was on my tongue,
But they were richly laden with all good,
And cannot be remembered but with thanks
And gratitude, and perfect joy of heart—
Those walks in all their freshness now came back
Like a returning Spring. When first I made
Once more the circuit of our little lake,
If ever happiness hath lodged with man,
That day consummate happiness was mine,
Wide-spreading, steady, calm, contemplative.

The sun was set, or setting, when I left
Our cottage door, and evening soon brought on
A sober hour, not winning or serene,
For cold and raw the air was, and untuned
But as a face we love is sweetest then
When sorrow damps it, or, whatever look
It chance to wear, is sweetest if the heart
Have fulness in herself ; even so with me
It fared that evening. Gently did my soul
Put off her veil, and, self-transmuted, stood
Naked, as in the presence of her God.
While on I walked, a comfort seemed to touch
A heart that had not been disconsolate :
Strength came where weakness was not known
to be,

At least not felt ; and restoration came
Like an intruder knocking at the door
Of unacknowledged weariness. I took
The balance, and with firm hand weighed myself
—Of that external scene which round me lay,
Little, in this abstraction, did I see ;
Remembered less ; but I had inward hopes
And swellings of the spirit, was rapt and soothed
Conversed with promises, had glimmering views
How life pervades the undecaying mind ;
How the immortal soul with God-like power
Informs, creates, and thaws the deepest sleep
That time can lay upon her ; how on earth,
Man, if he do but live within the light
Of high endeavours, daily spreads abroad
His being armed with strength that cannot fail.
Nor was there want of milder thoughts, of love
Of innocence, and holiday repose ;
And more than pastoral quiet, 'mid the stir
Of boldest projects, and a peaceful end
At last, or glorious, by endurance won.
Thus musing, in a wood I sate me down
Alone, continuing there to muse : the slopes
And heights meanwhile were slowly overspread
With darkness, and before a rippling breeze
The long lake lengthened out its hoary line,
And in the sheltered coppice where I sate,
Around me from among the hazel leaves,
Now here, now there, moved by the straggling
wind,

Came ever and anon a breath-like sound,
Quick as the pantings of the faithful dog,
The off and on companion of my walk ;
And such, at times, believing them to be,
I turned my head to look if he were there ;
Then into solemn thought I passed once more.

A freshness also found I at this time
In human Life, the daily life of those

Whose occupations really I loved ;
 The peaceful scene oft filled me with surprise
 Changed like a garden in the heat of spring
 After an eight-days' absence. For (to omit
 The things which were the same and yet appeared
 Far otherwise) amid this rural solitude,
 A narrow Vale where each was known to all,
 'Twas not indifferent to a youthful mind
 To mark some sheltering bower or sunny nook,
 Where an old man had used to sit alone,
 Now vacant ; pale-faced babes whom I had left
 In arms, now rosy prattlers at the feet
 Of a pleased grandame tottering up and down ;
 And growing girls whose beauty, filched away
 With all its pleasant promises, was gone
 To deck some slighted playmate's homely cheek.

Yes, I had something of a subtler sense,
 And often looking round was moved to smiles
 Such as a delicate work of humour breeds ;
 I read, without design, the opinions, thoughts,
 Of those plain-living people now observed
 With clearer knowledge ; with another eye
 I saw the quiet woodman in the woods,
 The shepherd roam the hills. With new delight,
 This chiefly, did I note my grey-haired Dame ;
 Saw her go forth to church or other work
 Of state equipped in monumental trim ;
 Short velvet cloak, (her bonnet of the like),
 A mantle such as Spanish Cavaliers
 Wore in old time. Her smooth domestic life,
 Affectionate without disquietude,
 Her talk, her business, pleased me ; and no less
 Her clear though shallow stream of piety
 That ran on Sabbath days a fresher course ;
 With thoughts unfelt till now I saw her read
 Her Bible on hot Sunday afternoons,
 And loved the book, when she had dropped asleep
 And made of it a pillow for her head.

Nor less do I remember to have felt,
 Distinctly manifested at this time,
 A human-heartedness about my love
 For objects hitherto the absolute wealth
 Of my own private being and no more ;
 Which I had loved, even as a blessed spirit
 Or Angel, if he were to dwell on earth,
 Might love in individual happiness.
 But now there opened on me other thoughts
 Of change, congratulation or regret,
 A pensive feeling ! It spread far and wide ;
 The trees, the mountains shared it, and the brooks,
 The stars of Heaven, now seen in their old
 haunts—

White Sirius glittering o'er the southern crags,
 Orion with his belt, and those fair Seven,
 Acquaintances of every little child,
 And Jupiter, my own beloved star !
 Whatever shadings of mortality,
 Whatever imports from the world of death
 Had come among these objects heretofore,
 Were, in the main, of mood less tender : strong,
 Deep, gloomy were they, and severe ; the scat-
 terings

Of awe or tremulous dread, that had given way
 In later youth to yearnings of a love
 Enthusiastic, to delight and hope.

As one who hangs down-bending from the side
 Of a slow-moving boat, upon the breast
 Of a still water, solacing himself
 With such discoveries as his eye can make
 Beneath him in the bottom of the deep,
 Sees many beauteous sights—weeds, fishes, flowers,
 Grotts, pebbles, roots of trees, and fancies more,
 Yet often is perplexed, and cannot part
 The shadow from the substance, rocks and sky,
 Mountains and clouds, reflected in the depth
 Of the clear flood, from things which there abide
 In their true dwelling ; now is crossed by gleam
 Of his own image, by a sun-beam now,
 And wavering motions sent he knows not whence,
 Impediments that make his task more sweet ;
 Such pleasant office have we long pursued
 Incumbent o'er the surface of past time
 With like success, nor often have appeared
 Shapes fairer or less doubtfully discerned
 Than these to which the Tale, indulgent Friend !
 Would now direct thy notice. Yet in spite
 Of pleasure won, and knowledge not withheld,
 There was an inner falling off—I loved,
 Loved deeply all that had been loved before,
 More deeply even than ever : but a swarm
 Of heady schemes jostling each other, gawds,
 And feast and dance, and public revelry,
 And sports and games (too grateful in themselves,
 Yet in themselves less grateful, I believe,
 Than as they were a badge glossy and fresh
 Of manliness and freedom) all conspired
 To lure my mind from firm habitual quest
 Of feeding pleasures, to depress the zeal
 And damp those yearnings which had once been
 mine—

A wild, unworldly-minded youth, given up
 To his own eager thoughts. It would demand
 Some skill, and longer time than may be spared
 To paint these vanities, and how they wrought
 In haunts where they, till now, had been unknown.

It seemed the very garments that I wore
 Preyed on my strength, and stopped the quiet
 stream
 Of self-forgetfulness.

Yes, that heartless chase

Of trivial pleasures was a poor exchange
 For books and nature at that early age.
 'Tis true, some casual knowledge might be gained
 Of character or life; but at that time,
 Of manners put to school I took small note,
 And all my deeper passions lay elsewhere.
 Far better had it been to exalt the mind
 By solitary study, to uphold
 Intense desire through meditative peace;
 And yet, for chastisement of these regrets,
 The memory of one particular hour
 Doth here rise up against me. 'Mid a throng
 Of maids and youths, old men, and matrons staid,
 A medley of all tempers, I had passed
 The night in dancing, gaiety, and mirth,
 With din of instruments and shuffling feet,
 And glancing forms, and tapers glittering,
 And unaimed prattle flying up and down;
 Spirits upon the stretch, and here and there
 Slight shocks of young love-like interspersed,
 Whose transient pleasure mounted to the head,
 And tingled through the veins. Ere we retired,
 The cock had crowed, and now the eastern sky
 Was kindling, not unseen, from humble copse
 And open field, through which the pathway wound,
 And homeward led my steps. Magnificent
 The morning rose, in memorable pomp,
 Glorious as e'er I had beheld—in front,
 The sea lay laughing at a distance; near,
 The solid mountains shone, bright as the clouds,
 Grain-tinctured, drenched in empyrean light;
 And in the meadows and the lower grounds
 Was all the sweetness of a common dawn—
 Dews, vapours, and the melody of birds,
 And labourers going forth to till the fields.
 Ah! need I say, dear Friend! that to the brim
 My heart was full; I made no vows, but vows
 Were then made for me; bond unknown to me
 Was given, that I should be, else sinning greatly,
 A dedicated Spirit. On I walked
 In thankful blessedness, which yet survives.

Strange rendezvous! My mind was at that time
 A parti-coloured show of grave and gay,
 Solid and light, short-sighted and profound;
 Of inconsiderate habits and sedate,
 Consorting in one mansion unreproved.
 The worth I knew of powers that I possessed,
 Though slighted and too oft misused. Besides,

That summer, swarming as it did with thoughts
 Transient and idle, lacked not intervals
 When Folly from the frown of fleeting Time
 Shrunk, and the mind experienced in herself
 Conformity as just as that of old
 To the end and written spirit of God's works,
 Whether held forth in Nature or in Man,
 Through pregnant vision, separate or conjoined.

When from our better selves we have too long
 Been parted by the hurrying world, and droop,
 Sick of its business, of its pleasures tired,
 How gracious, how benign, is Solitude;
 How potent a mere image of her sway;
 Most potent when impressed upon the mind
 With an appropriate human centre—hermit,
 Deep in the bosom of the wilderness;
 Votary (in vast cathedral, where no foot
 Is treading, where no other face is seen)
 Kneeling at prayers; or watchman on the top
 Of lighthouse, beaten by Atlantic waves;
 Or as the soul of that great Power is met
 Sometimes embodied on a public road,
 When, for the night deserted, it assumes
 A character of quiet more profound
 Than pathless wastes.

Once, when those summer months
 Were flown, and autumn brought its annual show
 Of oars with oars contending, sails with sails,
 Upon Winander's spacious breast, it chanced
 That—after I had left a flower-decked room
 (Whose in-door pastime, lighted up, survived
 To a late hour), and spirits overwrought
 Were making night do penance for a day
 Spent in a round of strenuous idleness—
 My homeward course led up a long ascent,
 Where the road's watery surface, to the top
 Of that sharp rising, glittered to the moon
 And bore the semblance of another stream
 Stealing with silent lapse to join the brook
 That murmured in the vale. All else was still;
 No living thing appeared in earth or air,
 And, save the flowing water's peaceful voice,
 Sound there was none— but, lo! an uncouth shape,
 Shown by a sudden turning of the road,
 So near that, slipping back into the shade
 Of a thick hawthorn, I could mark him well,
 Myself unseen. He was of stature tall,
 A span above man's common measure, tall,
 Stiff, lank, and upright; a more meagre man
 Was never seen before by night or day.
 Long were his arms, pallid his hands; his mouth
 Looked ghastly in the moonlight: from behind,
 A mile-stone propped him; I could also ken

That he was clothed in military garb,
 Though faded, yet entire. Companionless,
 No dog attending, by no staff sustained,
 He stood, and in his very dress appeared
 A desolation, a simplicity,
 To which the trappings of a gaudy world
 Make a strange back-ground. From his lips, ere
 long,

Issued low muttered sounds, as if of pain
 Or some uneasy thought; yet still his form
 Kept the same awful steadiness—at his feet
 His shadow lay, and moved not. From self-blame
 Not wholly free, I watched him thus; at length
 Subduing my heart's specious cowardice,
 I left the shady nook where I had stood
 And hailed him. Slowly from his resting-place
 He rose, and with a lean and wasted arm
 In measured gesture lifted to his head
 Returned my salutation; then resumed
 His station as before; and when I asked
 His history, the veteran, in reply,
 Was neither slow nor eager; but, unmoved,
 And with a quiet uncomplaining voice,
 A stately air of mild indifference,
 He told in few plain words a soldier's tale—
 That in the Tropic Islands he had served,
 Whence he had landed scarcely three weeks past;
 That on his landing he had been dismissed,
 And now was travelling towards his native home.
 This heard, I said, in pity, "Come with me."
 He stooped, and straightway from the ground
 took up
 An oaken staff by me yet unobserved—
 A staff which must have dropped from his slack
 hand
 And lay till now neglected in the grass.
 Though weak his step and cautious, he appeared
 To travel without pain, and I beheld,

With an astonishment but ill suppressed,
 His ghostly figure moving at my side;
 Nor could I, while we journeyed thus, forbear
 To turn from present hardships to the past,
 And speak of war, battle, and pestilence,
 Sprinkling this talk with questions, better spared,
 On what he might himself have seen or felt.
 He all the while was in demeanour calm,
 Concise in answer; solemn and sublime
 He might have seemed, but that in all he said
 There was a strange half-absence, as of one
 Knowing too well the importance of his theme,
 But feeling it no longer. Our discourse
 Soon ended, and together on we passed
 In silence through a wood gloomy and still.
 Up-turning, then, along an open field,
 We reached a cottage. At the door I knocked,
 And earnestly to charitable care
 Commended him as a poor friendless man,
 Belated and by sickness overcome.
 Assured that now the traveller would repose
 In comfort, I entreated that henceforth
 He would not linger in the public ways,
 But ask for timely furtherance and help
 Such as his state required. At this reproof,
 With the same ghastly mildness in his look,
 He said, "My trust is in the God of Heaven,
 And in the eye of him who passes me!"

The cottage door was speedily unbarred,
 And now the soldier touched his hat once more
 With his lean hand, and in a faltering voice,
 Whose tone bespoke reviving interests
 Till then unfelt, he thanked me; I returned
 The farewell blessing of the patient man,
 And so we parted. Back I cast a look,
 And lingered near the door a little space,
 Then sought with quiet heart my distant home.

BOOK FIFTH.

BOOKS.

WHEN Contemplation, like the night-calm felt
 Through earth and sky, spreads widely, and sends
 deep
 Into the soul its tranquillising power,
 Even then I sometimes grieve for thee, O Man,
 Earth's paramount Creature! not so much for woes

That thou endurest; heavy though that weight be,
 Cloud-like it mounts, or touched with light divine
 Doth melt away; but for those palms achieved,
 Through length of time, by patient exercise
 Of study and hard thought; there, there, it is
 That sadness finds its fuel. Hitherto,
 In progress through this Verse, my mind hath
 looked

Upon the speaking face of earth and heaven
 As her prime teacher, intercourse with man
 Established by the sovereign Intellect,
 Who through that bodily image hath diffused,
 As might appear to the eye of fleeting time,
 A deathless spirit. Thou also, man ! hast wrought,
 For commerce of thy nature with herself,
 Things that aspire to unconquerable life ;
 And yet we feel—we cannot choose but feel—
 That they must perish. Tremblings of the heart
 It gives, to think that our immortal being
 No more shall need such garments ; and yet man,
 As long as he shall be the child of earth,
 Might almost “ weep to have ” what he may lose,
 Nor be himself extinguished, but survive,
 Abject, depressed, forlorn, disconsolate.
 A thought is with me sometimes, and I say,—
 Should the whole frame of earth by inward throes
 Be wrenched, or fire come down from far to scorch
 Her pleasant habitations, and dry up
 Old Ocean, in his bed left singed and bare,
 Yet would the living Presence still subsist
 Victorious, and composure would ensue,
 And kindlings like the morning—presage sure
 Of day returning and of life revived.
 But all the meditations of mankind,
 Yea, all the adamantine holds of truth
 By reason built, or passion, which itself
 Is highest reason in a soul sublime ;
 The consecrated works of Bard and Sage,
 Sensuous or intellectual, wrought by men,
 Twin labourers and heirs of the same hopes ;
 Where would they be ? Oh ! why hath not the
 Mind

Some element to stamp her image on
 In nature somewhat nearer to her own ?
 Why, gifted with such powers to send abroad
 Her spirit, must it lodge in shrines so frail ?

One day, when from my lips a like complaint
 Had fallen in presence of a studious friend,
 He with a smile made answer, that in truth
 ’Twas going far to seek disquietude :
 But on the front of his reproof confessed
 That he himself had oftentimes given way
 To kindred hauntings. Whereupon I told,
 That once in the stillness of a summer’s noon,
 While I was seated in a rocky cave
 By the sea-side, perusing, so it chanced,
 The famous history of the errant knight
 Recorded by Cervantes, these same thoughts
 Beset me, and to height unusual rose,
 While listlessly I sate, and, having closed
 The book, had turned my eyes toward the wide sea.

On poetry and geometric truth,
 And their high privilege of lasting life,
 From all internal injury exempt,
 I mused ; upon these chiefly : and at length,
 My senses yielding to the sultry air,
 Sleep seized me, and I passed into a dream.
 I saw before me stretched a boundless plain
 Of sandy wilderness, all black and void,
 And as I looked around, distress and fear
 Came creeping over me, when at my side,
 Close at my side, an uncouth shape appeared
 Upon a dromedary, mounted high.
 He seemed an Arab of the Bedouin tribes :
 A lance he bore, and underneath one arm
 A stone, and in the opposite hand a shell
 Of a surpassing brightness. At the sight
 Much I rejoiced, not doubting but a guide
 Was present, one who with unerring skill
 Would through the desert lead me ; and while yet
 I looked and looked, self-questioned what this
 freight

Which the new comer carried through the waste
 Could mean, the Arab told me that the stone
 (To give it in the language of the dream)
 Was “ Euclid’s Elements ; ” and “ This,” said he,
 “ Is something of more worth ; ” and at the word
 Stretched forth the shell, so beautiful in shape,
 In colour so resplendent, with command
 That I should hold it to my ear. I did so,
 And heard that instant in an unknown tongue,
 Which yet I understood, articulate sounds,
 A loud prophetic blast of harmony ;
 An Ode, in passion uttered, which foretold
 Destruction to the children of the earth
 By deluge, now at hand. No sooner ceased
 The song, than the Arab with calm look declared
 That all would come to pass of which the voice
 Had given forewarning, and that he himself
 Was going then to bury those two books :
 The one that held acquaintance with the stars,
 And wedded soul to soul in purest bond
 Of reason, undisturbed by space or time ;
 The other that was a god, yea many gods,
 Had voices more than all the winds, with power
 To exhilarate the spirit, and to soothe,
 Through every clime, the heart of human kind.
 While this was uttering, strange as it may seem,
 I wondered not, although I plainly saw
 The one to be a stone, the other a shell ;
 Nor doubted once but that they both were books,
 Having a perfect faith in all that passed.
 Far stronger, now, grew the desire I felt
 To cleave unto this man ; but when I prayed
 To share his enterprise, he hurried on

Reckless of me : I followed, not unseen,
 For oftentimes he cast a backward look,
 Grasping his twofold treasure.—Lance in rest,
 He rode, I keeping pace with him ; and now
 He, to my fancy, had become the knight
 Whose tale Cervantes tells ; yet not the knight,
 But was an Arab of the desert too ;
 Of these was neither, and was both at once.
 His countenance, meanwhile, grew more disturbed ;
 And, looking backwards when he looked, mine eyes
 Saw, over half the wilderness diffused,
 A bed of glittering light : I asked the cause :
 "It is," said he, "the waters of the deep
 Gathering upon us ;" quickening then the pace
 Of the unwieldy creature he bestrode,
 He left me : I called after him aloud ;
 He heeded not ; but, with his twofold charge
 Still in his grasp, before me, full in view,
 Went hurrying o'er the illimitable waste,
 With the fleet waters of a drowning world
 In chase of him ; whereat I waked in terror,
 And saw the sea before me, and the book,
 In which I had been reading, at my side.

Full often, taking from the world of sleep
 This Arab phantom, which I thus beheld,
 This semi-Quixote, I to him have given
 A substance, fancied him a living man,
 A gentle dweller in the desert, crazed
 By love and feeling, and internal thought
 Protracted among endless solitudes ;
 Have shaped him wandering upon this quest !
 Nor have I pitied him ; but rather felt
 Reverence was due to a being thus employed ;
 And thought that, in the blind and awful lair
 Of such a madness, reason did lie couched.
 Enow there are on earth to take in charge
 Their wives, their children, and their virgin loves,
 Or whatsoever else the heart holds dear ;
 Enow to stir for these ; yea, will I say,
 Contemplating in soberness the approach
 Of an event so dire, by signs in earth
 Or heaven made manifest, that I could share
 That maniac's fond anxiety, and go
 Upon like errand. Oftentimes at least
 Me hath such strong entrancement overcome,
 When I have held a volume in my hand,
 Poor earthly casket of immortal verse,
 Shakespeare, or Milton, labourers divine !

Great and benign, indeed, must be the power
 Of living nature, which could thus so long
 Detain me from the best of other guides
 And dearest helpers, left unthanked, unpraised,

Even in the time of lisping infancy ;
 And later down, in prattling childhood even,
 While I was travelling back among those days,
 How could I ever play an ingrate's part ?
 Once more should I have made those bowers
 resound,
 By intermingling strains of thankfulness
 With their own thoughtless melodies ; at least
 It might have well beseeemed me to repeat
 Some simply fashioned tale, to tell again,
 In slender accents of sweet verse, some tale
 That did bewitch me then, and soothes me now.
 O Friend ! O Poet ! brother of my soul,
 Think not that I could pass along untouched
 By these remembrances. Yet wherefore speak ?
 Why call upon a few weak words to say
 What is already written in the hearts
 Of all that breathe ?—what in the path of all
 Drops daily from the tongue of every child,
 Wherever man is found ? The trickling tear
 Upon the cheek of listening Infancy
 Proclaims it, and the insuperable look
 That drinks as if it never could be full.

That portion of my story I shall leave
 There registered : whatever else of power
 Or pleasure sown, or fostered thus, may be
 Peculiar to myself, let that remain
 Where still it works, though hidden from all
 search

Among the depths of time. Yet is it just
 That here, in memory of all books which lay
 Their sure foundations in the heart of man,
 Whether by native prose, or numerous verse,
 That in the name of all inspired souls—
 From Homer the great Thunderer, from the voice
 That roars along the bed of Jewish song,
 And that more varied and elaborate,
 Those trumpet-tones of harmony that shake
 Our shores in England,—from those loftiest notes
 Down to the low and wren-like warblings, made
 For cottagers and spinners at the wheel.
 And sun-burnt travellers resting their tired limbs,
 Stretched under wayside hedge-rows, ballad tunes,
 Food for the hungry ears of little ones,
 And of old men who have survived their joys—
 'Tis just that in behalf of these, the works,
 And of the men that framed them, whether known
 Or sleeping nameless in their scattered graves,
 That I should here assert their rights, attest
 Their honours, and should, once for all, pronounce
 Their benediction ; speak of them as Powers
 For ever to be hallowed ; only less,
 For what we are and what we may become,

Than Nature's self, which is the breath of God,
Or His pure Word by miracle revealed.

Rarely and with reluctance would I stoop
To transitory themes; yet I rejoice,
And, by these thoughts admonished, will pour out
Thanks with uplifted heart, that I was reared
Safe from an evil which these days have laid
Upon the children of the land, a pest
That might have dried me up, body and soul.
This verse is dedicate to Nature's self,
And things that teach as Nature teaches: then,
Oh! where had been the Man, the Poet where,
Where had we been, we two, beloved Friend!
If in the season of unperilous choice,
In lieu of wandering, as we did, through vales
Rich with indigenous produce, open ground
Of Fancy, happy pastures ranged at will,
We had been followed, hourly watched, and noosed,
Each in his several melancholy walk
Stringed like a poor man's heifer at its feed,
Led through the lanes in forlorn servitude;
Or rather like a stallèd ox debarred
From touch of growing grass, that may not taste
A flower till it have yielded up its sweets
A prelibation to the mower's scythe.

Behold the parent hen amid her brood,
Though fledged and feathered, and well pleased
to part
And straggle from her presence, still a brood,
And she herself from the maternal bond
Still undischarged; yet doth she little more
Than move with them in tenderness and love,
A centre to the circle which they make;
And now and then, alike from need of theirs
And call of her own natural appetites,
She scratches, ransacks up the earth for food,
Which they partake at pleasure. Early died
My honoured Mother, she who was the heart
And hinge of all our learnings and our loves:
She left us destitute, and, as we might,
Trooping together. Little suits it me
To break upon the sabbath of her rest
With any thought that looks at others' blame;
Nor would I praise her but in perfect love.
Hence am I checked: but let me boldly say,
In gratitude, and for the sake of truth,
Unheard by her, that she, not falsely taught,
Fetching her goodness rather from times past,
Than shaping novelties for times to come,
Had no presumption, no such jealousy,
Nor did by habit of her thoughts mistrust
Our nature, but had virtual faith that He

Who fills the mother's breast with innocent milk,
Doth also for our nobler part provide,
Under His great correction and control,
As innocent instincts, and as innocent food;
Or draws for minds that are left free to trust
In the simplicities of opening life
Sweet honey out of spurned or dreaded weeds.
This was her creed, and therefore she was pure
From anxious fear of error or mishap,
And evil, overweeningly so called;
Was not puffed up by false unnatural hopes,
Nor selfish with unnecessary cares,
Nor with impatience from the season asked
More than its timely produce; rather loved
The hours for what they are, than from regard
Glanced on their promises in restless pride.
Such was she—not from faculties more strong
Than others have, but from the times, perhaps,
And spot in which she lived, and through a grace
Of modest meekness, simple-mindedness,
A heart that found benignity and hope,
Being itself benign.

My drift I fear
Is scarcely obvious; but, that common sense
May try this modern system by its fruits,
Leave let me take to place before her sight
A specimen portrayed with faithful hand.
Full early trained to worship seemliness,
This model of a child is never known
To mix in quarrels; that were far beneath
Its dignity; with gifts he bubbles o'er
As generous as a fountain; selfishness
May not come near him, nor the little throng
Of flitting pleasures tempt him from his path;
The wandering beggars propagate his name,
Dumb creatures find him tender as a nun,
And natural or supernatural fear,
Unless it leap upon him in a dream,
Touches him not. To enhance the wonder, see
How arch his notices, how nice his sense
Of the ridiculous; not blind is he
To the broad follies of the licensed world,
Yet innocent himself withal, though shrewd,
And can read lectures upon innocence;
A miracle of scientific lore,
Ships he can guide across the pathless sea,
And tell you all their cunning; he can read
The inside of the earth, and spell the stars;
He knows the policies of foreign lands;
Can string you names of districts, cities, towns,
The whole world over, tight as beads of dew
Upon a gossamer thread; he sifts, he weighs;
All things are put to question; he must live
Knowing that he grows wiser every day

Or else not live at all, and seeing too
 Each little drop of wisdom as it falls
 Into the dimpling cistern of his heart :
 For this unnatural growth the trainer blame,
 Pity the tree.—Poor human vanity,
 Wert thou extinguished, little would be left
 Which he could truly love ; but how escape ?
 For, ever as a thought of purer birth
 Rises to lead him toward a better clime,
 Some intermeddler still is on the watch
 To drive him back, and pound him, like a stray,
 Within the pinfold of his own conceit.
 Meanwhile old grandame earth is grieved to find
 The playthings, which her love designed for him,
 Unthought of: in their woodland beds the flowers
 Weep, and the river sides are all forlorn.
 Oh ! give us once again the wishing cap
 Of Fortunatus, and the invisible coat
 Of Jack the Giant-killer, Robin Hood,
 And Sabra in the forest with St. George !
 The child, whose love is here, at least, doth reap
 One precious gain, that he forgets himself.

These mighty workmen of our later age,
 Who, with a broad highway, have overbridged
 The froward chaos of futurity,
 Famed to their bidding ; they who have the skill
 To manage books, and things, and make them act
 On infant minds as surely as the sun
 Deals with a flower ; the keepers of our time,
 The guides and wardens of our faculties,
 Sages who in their prescience would control
 All accidents, and to the very road
 Which they have fashioned would confine us down,
 Like engines ; when will their presumption learn,
 That in the unreasoning progress of the world
 A wiser spirit is at work for us,
 A better eye than theirs, most prodigal
 Of blessings, and most studious of our good,
 Even in what seem our most unfruitful hours ?

* There was a Boy : ye knew him well, ye cliffs
 And islands of Winander !—many a time
 At evening, when the earliest stars began
 To move along the edges of the hills,
 Rising or setting, would he stand alone
 Beneath the trees or by the glimmering lake,
 And there, with fingers interwoven, both hands
 Pressed closely palm to palm, and to his mouth
 Uplifted, he, as through an instrument,
 Blew mimic hootings to the silent owls,
 That they might answer him ; and they would shout

Across the watery vale, and shout again,
 Responsive to his call, with quivering peals,
 And long halloos and screams, and echoes loud,
 Redoubled and redoubled, concourse wild
 Of jocund din ; and, when a lengthened pause
 Of silence came and baffled his best skill,
 Then sometimes, in that silence while he hung
 Listening, a gentle shock of mild surprise
 Has carried far into his heart the voice
 Of mountain torrents ; or the visible scene
 Would enter unawares into his mind,
 With all its solemn imagery, its rocks,
 Its woods, and that uncertain heaven, received
 Into the bosom of the steady lake.

This Boy was taken from his mates, and died
 In childhood, ere he was full twelve years old.
 Fair is the spot, most beautiful the vale
 Where he was born ; the grassy churchyard hangs
 Upon a slope above the village school,
 And through that churchyard when my way has
 led

On summer evenings, I believe that there
 A long half hour together I have stood
 Mute, looking at the grave in which he lies !
 Even now appears before the mind's clear eye
 That self-same village church ; I see her sit
 (The thronèd Lady whom erewhile we hailed)
 On her green hill, forgetful of this Boy
 Who slumbers at her feet,—forgetful, too,
 Of all her silent neighbourhood of graves,
 And listening only to the gladsome sounds
 That, from the rural school ascending, play
 Beneath her and about her. May she long
 Behold a race of young ones like to those
 With whom I herded !—(easily, indeed,
 We might have fed upon a fatter soil
 Of arts and letters—but be that forgiven)—
 A race of real children ; not too wise,
 Too learned, or too good ; but wanton, fresh,
 And bandied up and down by love and hate ;
 Not unresentful where self-justified ;
 Fierce, moody, patient, venturous, modest, shy ;
 Mad at their sports like withered leaves in winds ;
 Though doing wrong and suffering, and full oft
 Bending beneath our life's mysterious weight
 Of pain, and doubt, and fear, yet yielding not
 In happiness to the happiest upon earth.
 Simplicity in habit, truth in speech,
 Be these the daily strengtheners of their minds ;
 May books and Nature be their early joy !
 And knowledge, rightly honoured with that
 name—

Knowledge not purchased by the loss of power !

* See p. 141.—*Ed.*

Well do I call to mind the very week
 When I was first intrusted to the care
 Of that sweet Valley ; when its paths, its shores,
 And brooks were like a dream of novelty
 To my half-infant thoughts ; that very week,
 While I was roving up and down alone,
 Seeking I knew not what, I chanced to cross
 One of those open fields, which, shaped like ears,
 Make green peninsulas on Esthwaite's Lake :
 Twilight was coming on, yet through the gloom
 Appeared distinctly on the opposite shore
 A heap of garments, as if left by one
 Who might have there been bathing. Long I
 watched,

But no one owned them ; meanwhile the calm lake
 Grew dark with all the shadows on its breast,
 And, now and then, a fish up-leaping snapped
 The breathless stillness. The succeeding day,
 Those unclaimed garments telling a plain tale
 Drew to the spot an anxious crowd ; some looked
 In passive expectation from the shore,
 While from a boat others hung o'er the deep,
 Sounding with grappling irons and long poles.
 At last, the dead man, 'mid that beauteous scene
 Of trees and hills and water, bolt upright
 Rose, with his ghastly face, a spectre shape
 Of terror ; yet no soul-debasing fear,
 Young as I was, a child not nine years old,
 Possessed me, for my inner eye had seen
 Such sights before, among the shining streams
 Of faëry land, the forest of romance.
 Their spirit hallowed the sad spectacle
 With decoration of ideal grace ;
 A dignity, a smoothness, like the works
 Of Grecian art, and purest poesy.

A precious treasure had I long possessed,
 A little yellow, canvas-covered book,
 A slender abstract of the Arabian tales ;
 And, from companions in a new abode,
 When first I learnt, that this dear prize of mine
 Was but a block hewn from a mighty quarry—
 That there were four large volumes, laden all
 With kindred matter, 'twas to me, in truth,
 A promise scarcely earthly. Instantly,
 With one not richer than myself, I made
 A covenant that each should lay aside
 The moneys he possessed, and hoard up more,
 Till our joint savings had amassed enough
 To make this book our own. Through several
 months,

In spite of all temptation, we preserved
 Religiously that vow ; but firmness failed,
 Nor were we ever masters of our wish.

And when thereafter to my father's house
 The holidays returned me, there to find
 That golden store of books which I had left,
 What joy was mine ! How often in the course
 Of those glad respites, though a soft west wind
 Ruffled the waters to the angler's wish,
 For a whole day together, have I lain
 Down by thyside, O Derwent ! murmuring stream,
 On the hot stones, and in the glaring sun,
 And there have read, devouring as I read,
 Defrauding the day's glory, desperate !
 Till with a sudden bound of smart reproach,
 Such as an idler deals with in his shame,
 I to the sport betook myself again.

A gracious spirit o'er this earth presides,
 And o'er the heart of man ; invisibly
 It comes, to works of unproved delight,
 And tendency benign, directing those
 Who care not, know not, think not what they do.
 The tales that charm away the wakeful night
 In Araby, romances ; legends penned
 For solace by dim light of monkish lamps ;
 Fictions, for ladies of their love, devised
 By youthful squires ; adventures endless, spun
 By the dismantled warrior in old age,
 Out of the bowels of those very schemes
 In which his youth did first extravagate ;
 These spread like day, and something in the shape
 Of these will live till man shall be no more.
 Dumb yearnings, hidden appetites, are ours,
 And *they must* have their food. Our childhood
 sits,

Our simple childhood, sits upon a throne
 That hath more power than all the elements.
 I guess not what this tells of Being past,
 Nor what it augurs of the life to come ;
 But so it is, and, in that dubious hour,
 That twilight when we first begin to see
 This dawning earth, to recognise, expect,
 And, in the long probation that ensues,
 The time of trial, ere we learn to live
 In reconciliation with our stinted powers ;
 To endure this state of meagre vassalage,
 Unwilling to forego, confess, submit,
 Uneasy and unsettled, yoke-fellows
 To custom, mettlesome, and not yet tamed
 And humbled down ; oh ! then we feel, we feel,
 We know where we have friends. Ye dreamers,
 then,

Forgers of daring tales ! we bless you then,
 Impostors, drivellers, dotards, as the ape
 Philosophy will call you : *then* we feel
 With what, and how great might ye are in league,

Who make our wish, our power, our thought a deed,

An empire, a possession,—ye whom time
And seasons serve; all Faculties to whom
Earth crouches, the elements are potter's clay,
Space like a heaven filled up with northern lights,
Here, nowhere, there, and everywhere at once.

Relinquishing this lofty eminence
For ground, though humbler, not the less a tract
Of the same isthmus, which our spirits cross
In progress from their native continent
To earth and human life, the Song might dwell
On that delightful time of growing youth,
When craving for the marvellous gives way
To strengthening love for things that we have seen;
When sober truth and steady sympathies,
Offered to notice by less daring pens,
Take firmer hold of us, and words themselves
Move us with conscious pleasure.

I am sad

At thought of rapture now for ever flown;
Almost to tears I sometimes could be sad
To think of, to read over, many a page,
Poems withal of name, which at that time
Did never fail to entrance me, and are now
Dead in my eyes, dead as a theatre
Fresh emptied of spectators. Twice five years
Or less I might have seen, when first my mind
With conscious pleasure opened to the charm
Of words in tuneful order, found them sweet
For their own *sakes*, a passion, and a power;
And phrases pleased me chosen for delight,
For pomp, or love. Oft, in the public roads
Yet unfrequented, while the morning light
Was yellowing the hill tops, I went abroad
With a dear friend, and for the better part
Of two delightful hours we strolled along
By the still borders of the misty lake,
Repeating favourite verses with one voice,
Or conning more, as happy as the birds

That round us chaunted. Well might we be glad,
Lifted above the ground by airy fancies,
More bright than madness or the dreams of wine;
And, though full oft the objects of our love
Were false, and in their splendour overwrought,
Yet was there surely then no vulgar power
Working within us,—nothing less, in truth,
Than that most noble attribute of man,
Though yet untutored and inordinate,
That wish for something loftier, more adorned,
Than is the common aspect, daily garb,
Of human life. What wonder, then, if sounds
Of exultation echoed through the groves!
For, images, and sentiments, and words,
And everything encountered or pursued
In that delicious world of poesy,
Kept holiday, a never-ending show,
With music, incense, festival, and flowers!

Here must we pause: this only let me add,
From heart-experience, and in humblest sense
Of modesty, that he, who in his youth
A daily wanderer among woods and fields
With living Nature hath been intimate,
Not only in that raw unpractised time
Is stirred to extasy, as others are,
By glittering verse; but further, doth receive,
In measure only dealt out to himself,
Knowledge and increase of enduring joy
From the great Nature that exists in works
Of mighty Poets. Visionary power
Attends the motions of the viewless winds,
Embodied in the mystery of words:
There, darkness makes abode, and all the host
Of shadowy things work endless changes,—there,
As in a mansion like their proper home,
Even forms and substances are circumfused
By that transparent veil with light divine,
And, through the turnings intricate of verse,
Present themselves as objects recognised,
In flashes, and with glory not their own.

BOOK SIXTH.

CAMBRIDGE AND THE ALPS.

THE leaves were fading when to Esthwaite's banks
 And the simplicities of cottage life
 I bade farewell; and, one among the youth
 Who, summoned by that season, reunite
 As scattered birds troop to the fowler's lure,
 Went back to Granta's cloisters, not so prompt
 Or eager, though as gay and undepressed
 In mind, as when I thence had taken flight
 A few short months before. I turned my face
 Without repining from the coves and heights
 Clothed in the sunshine of the withering fern;
 Quitted, not loth, the mild magnificence
 Of calmer lakes and louder streams; and you,
 Frank-hearted maids of rocky Cumberland,
 You and your not unwelcome days of mirth,
 Relinquished, and your nights of revelry,
 And in my own unlovely cell sate down
 In lightsome mood—such privilege has youth
 That cannot take long leave of pleasant thoughts.

The bonds of indolent society
 Relaxing in their hold, henceforth I lived
 More to myself. Two winters may be passed
 Without a separate notice: many books
 Were skimmed, devoured, or studiously perused,
 But with no settled plan. I was detached
 Internally from academic cares;
 Yet independent study seemed a course
 Of hardy disobedience toward friends
 And kindred, proud rebellion and unkind.
 This spurious virtue, rather let it bear
 A name it now deserves, this cowardice,
 Gave treacherous sanction to that over-leave
 Of freedom which encouraged me to turn
 From regulations even of my own
 As from restraints and bonds. Yet who can tell—
 Who knows what thus may have been gained,
 both then
 And at a later season, or preserved;
 What love of nature, what original strength
 Of contemplation, what intuitive truths
 The deepest and the best, what keen research,
 Unbiased, unbewildered, and unawed?

The Poet's soul was with me at that time;
 Sweet meditations, the still overflow

Of present happiness, while future years
 Lacked not anticipations, tender dreams,
 No few of which have since been realised;
 And some remain, hopes for my future life.
 Four years and thirty, told this very week,
 Have I been now a sojourner on earth,
 By sorrow not unsmitten; yet for me
 Life's morning radiance hath not left the hills,
 Her dew is on the flowers. Those were the days
 Which also first emboldened me to trust
 With firmness, hitherto but slightly touched
 By such a daring thought, that I might leave
 Some monument behind me which pure hearts
 Should reverence. The instinctive humbleness,
 Maintained even by the very name and thought
 Of printed books and authorship, began
 To melt away; and further, the dread awe
 Of mighty names was softened down and seemed
 Approachable, admitting fellowship
 Of modest sympathy. Such aspect now,
 Though not familiarly, my mind put on,
 Content to observe, to achieve, and to enjoy.

All winter long, whenever free to choose,
 Did I by night frequent the College grove
 And tributary walks; the last, and oft
 The only one, who had been lingering there
 Through hours of silence, till the porter's bell,
 A punctual follower on the stroke of nine,
 Rang with its blunt unceremonious voice,
 Inexorable summons! Lofty elms,
 Inviting shades of opportune recess,
 Bestowed composure on a neighbourhood
 Unpeaceful in itself. A single tree
 With sinuous trunk, boughs exquisitely wreathed,
 Grew there; an ash which Winter for himself
 Decked out with pride, and with outlandish grace:
 Up from the ground, and almost to the top,
 The trunk and every master branch were green
 With clustering ivy, and the lightsome twigs
 And outer spray profusely tipped with seeds
 That hung in yellow tassels, while the air
 Stirred them, not voiceless. Often have I stood
 Foot-bound uplooking at this lovely tree
 Beneath a frosty moon. The hemisphere
 Of magic fiction, verse of mine perchance
 May never tread; but scarcely Spenser's self
 Could have more tranquil visions in his youth,

Or could more bright appearances create
Of human forms with superhuman powers,
Than I beheld loitering on calm clear nights
Alone, beneath this fairy work of earth.

On the vague reading of a truant youth
Twere idle to descant. My inner judgment
Not seldom differed from my taste in books,
As if it appertained to another mind,
And yet the books which then I valued most
Are dearest to me *now* ; for, having scanned,
Not heedlessly, the laws, and watched the forms
Of Nature, in that knowledge I possessed
A standard, often usefully applied,
Even when unconsciously, to things removed
From a familiar sympathy.—In fine,
I was a better judge of thoughts than words,
Mised in estimating words, not only
By common inexperience of youth,
But by the trade in classic niceties,
The dangerous craft of culling term and phrase
From languages that want the living voice
To carry meaning to the natural heart ;
To tell us what is passion, what is truth,
What reason, what simplicity and sense.

Yet may we not entirely overlook
The pleasure gathered from the rudiments
Of geometric science. Though advanced
In these inquiries, with regret I speak,
No farther than the threshold, there I found
Both elevation and composed delight:
With Indian awe and wonder, ignorance pleased
With its own struggles, did I meditate
On the relation those abstractions bear
To Nature's laws, and by what process led,
Those immaterial agents bowed their heads
Duly to serve the mind of earth-born man ;
From star to star, from kindred sphere to sphere,
From system on to system without end.

More frequently from the same source I drew
A pleasure quiet and profound, a sense
Of permanent and universal sway,
And paramount belief ; there, recognised
A type, for finite natures, of the one
Supreme Existence, the surpassing life
Which—to the boundaries of space and time,
Of melancholy space and doleful time,
Superior and incapable of change,
Nor touched by welterings of passion—is,
And hath the name of God. Transcendent peace
And silence did await upon these thoughts
That were a frequent comfort to my youth.

'Tis told by one whom stormy waters threw,
With fellow-sufferers by the shipwreck spared,
Upon a desert coast, that having brought
To land a single volume, saved by chance,
A treatise of Geometry, he wont,
Although of food and clothing destitute,
And beyond common wretchedness depressed,
To part from company and take this book
(Then first a self-taught pupil in its truths)
To spots remote, and draw his diagrams
With a long staff upon the sand, and thus
Did oft beguile his sorrow, and almost
Forget his feeling : so (if like effect
From the same cause produced, 'mid outward
things

So different, may rightly be compared),
So was it then with me, and so will be
With Poets ever. Mighty is the charm
Of those abstractions to a mind beset
With images and haunted by herself,
And specially delightful unto me
Was that clear synthesis built up aloft
So gracefully ; even then when it appeared
Not more than a mere plaything, or a toy
To sense embodied : not the thing it is
In verity, an independent world,
Created out of pure intelligence.

Such dispositions then were mine unearned
By aught, I fear, of genuine desert—
Mine, through heaven's grace and inborn aptitudes.
And not to leave the story of that time
Imperfect, with these habits must be joined,
Moods melancholy, fits of spleen, that loved
A pensive sky, sad days, and piping winds,
The twilight more than dawn, autumn than spring ;
A treasured and luxurious gloom of choice
And inclination mainly, and the mere
Redundancy of youth's contentedness.
—To time thus spent, add multitudes of hours
Pilfered away, by what the Bard who sang
Of the Enchanter Indolence hath called
"Good-natured lounging," and behold a map
Of my collegiate life—far less intense
Than duty called for, or, without regard
To duty, *might* have sprung up of itself
By change of accidents, or even, to speak
Without unkindness, in another place.
Yet why take refuge in that plea?—the fault,
This I repeat, was mine ; mine be the blame.

In summer, making quest for works of art,
Or scenes renowned for beauty, I explored
That streamlet whose blue current works its way

Between romantic Dovedale's spiry rocks;
 Pried into Yorkshire dales, or hidden tracts
 Of my own native region, and was blest
 Between these sundry wanderings with a joy
 Above all joys, that seemed another morn
 Risen on mid noon; blest with the presence,
 Friend!

Of that sole Sister, her who hath been long
 Dear to thee also, thy true friend and mine,
 Now, after separation desolate,
 Restored to me—such absence that she seemed
 A gift then first bestowed. The varied banks
 Of Emont, hitherto unnamed in song,
 And that monastic castle, 'mid tall trees,
 Low standing by the margin of the stream,
 A mansion visited (as fame reports)
 By Sidney, where, in sight of our Helvellyn,
 Or stormy Cross-fell, snatches he might pen
 Of his Arcadia, by fraternal love
 Inspired;—that river and those mouldering towers
 Have seen us side by side, when, having clomb
 The darksome windings of a broken stair,*
 And crept along a ridge of fractured wall,
 Not without trembling, we in safety looked
 Forth, through some Gothic window's open space,
 And gathered with one mind a rich reward
 From the far-stretching landscape, by the light
 Of morning beautified, or purple eve;
 Or, not less pleased, lay on some turret's head,
 Catching from tufts of grass and hare-bell flowers
 Their faintest whisper to the passing breeze,
 Given out while mid-day heat oppressed the plains.

Another maid there was, who also shed
 A gladness o'er that season, then to me,
 By her exulting outside look of youth
 And placid under-countenance, first endeared;
 That other spirit, Coleridge! who is now
 So near to us, that meek confiding heart,
 So revered by us both. O'er paths and fields
 In all that neighbourhood, through narrow lanes
 Of eglantine, and through the shady woods,
 And o'er the Border Beacon, and the waste
 Of naked pools, and common crags that lay
 Exposed on the bare fell, were scattered love,
 The spirit of pleasure, and youth's golden gleam.
 O Friend! we had not seen thee at that time,
 And yet a power is on me, and a strong
 Confusion, and I seem to plant thee there.
 Far art thou wandered now in search of health
 And milder breezes,—melancholy lot!
 But thou art with us, with us in the past,
 The present, with us in the times to come.
 There is no grief, no sorrow, no despair,

No languor, no dejection, no dismay,
 No absence scarcely can there be, for those
 Who love as we do. Speed thee well! divide
 With us thy pleasure; thy returning strength,
 Receive it daily as a joy of ours;
 Share with us thy fresh spirits, whether gift
 Of gales Etesian or of tender thoughts.

I, too, have been a wanderer; but, alas!
 How different the fate of different men.
 Though mutually unknown, yea nursed and reared
 As if in several elements, we were framed
 To bend at last to the same discipline,
 Predestined, if two beings ever were,
 To seek the same delights, and have one health,
 One happiness. Throughout this narrative,
 Else sooner ended, I have borne in mind
 For whom it registers the birth, and marks the
 growth,
 Of gentleness, simplicity, and truth,
 And joyous loves, that hallow innocent days
 Of peace and self-command. Of rivers, fields,
 And groves I speak to thee, my Friend! to thee,
 Who, yet a liveried schoolboy, in the depths
 Of the huge city, on the leaded roof
 Of that wide edifice, thy school and home,
 Wert used to lie and gaze upon the clouds
 Moving in heaven; or, of that pleasure tired,
 To shut thine eyes, and by internal light
 See trees, and meadows, and thy native stream,
 Far distant, thus beheld from year to year
 Of a long exile. Nor could I forget,
 In this late portion of my argument,
 That scarcely, as my term of pupillage
 Ceased, had I left those academic bowers
 When thou wert thither guided. From the heart
 Of London, and from cloisters there, thou camest,
 And didst sit down in temperance and peace,
 A rigorous student. What a stormy course
 Then followed. Oh! it is a pang that calls
 For utterance, to think what easy change
 Of circumstances might to thee have spared
 A world of pain, ripened a thousand hopes,
 For ever withered. Through this retrospect
 Of my collegiate life I still have had
 Thy after-sojourn in the self-same place
 Present before my eyes, have played with times
 And accidents as children do with cards,
 Or as a man, who, when his house is built,
 A frame locked up in wood and stone, doth still,
 As impotent fancy prompts, by his fireside,
 Rebuild it to his liking. I have thought
 Of thee, thy learning, gorgeous eloquence,
 And all the strength and plumage of thy youth,

Thy subtle speculations, toils abstruse
Among the schoolmen, and Platonic forms
Of wild ideal pageantry, shaped out
From things well-matched or ill, and words for
things,

The self-created sustenance of a mind
Debarred from Nature's living images,
Compelled to be a life unto herself,
And unrelentingly possessed by thirst
Of greatness, love, and beauty. Not alone,
Ah! surely not in singleness of heart
Should I have seen the light of evening fade
From smooth Cam's silent waters: had we met,
Even at that early time, needs must I trust
In the belief, that my maturer age,
My calmer habits, and more steady voice,
Would with an influence benign have soothed,
Or chased away, the airy wretchedness
That battered on thy youth. But thou hast trod
A march of glory, which doth put to shame
These vain regrets; health suffers in thee, else
Such grief for thee would be the weakest thought
That ever harboured in the breast of man.

A passing word erewhile did lightly touch
On wanderings of my own, that now embraced
With livelier hope a region wider far.

When the third summer freed us from restraint,
A youthful friend, he too a mountaineer,
Not slow to share my wishes, took his staff,
And sallying forth, we journeyed side by side,
Bound to the distant Alps. A hardy slight
Did this unprecedented course imply
Of college studies and their set rewards;
Nor had, in truth, the scheme been formed by me
Without uneasy forethought of the pain,
The censures, and ill-omening of those
To whom my worldly interests were dear.
But Nature then was sovereign in my mind,
And mighty forms, seizing a youthful fancy,
Had given a charter to irregular hopes.
In any age of uneventful calm
Among the nations, surely would my heart
Have been possessed by similar desire;
But Europe at that time was thrilled with joy,
France standing on the top of golden hours,
And human nature seeming born again.

Lightly equipped, and but a few brief looks
Cast on the white cliffs of our native shore
From the receding vessel's deck, we chanced
To land at Calais on the very eve
Of that great federal day; and there we saw,

In a mean city, and among a few,
How bright a face is worn when joy of one
Is joy for tens of millions. Southward thence
We held our way, direct through hamlets, towns,
Gaudy with reliques of that festival,
Flowers left to wither on triumphal arcs,
And window-garlands. On the public roads,
And, once, three days successively, through paths
By which our toilsome journey was abridged,
Among sequestered villages we walked
And found benevolence and blessedness
Spread like a fragrance everywhere, when spring
Hath left no corner of the land untouched;
Where elms for many and many a league in files
With their thin umbrage, on the stately roads
Of that great kingdom, rustled o'er our heads,
For ever near us as we paced along:
How sweet at such a time, with such delight
On every side, in prime of youthful strength,
To feed a Poet's tender melancholy
And fond conceit of sadness, with the sound
Of undulations varying as might please
The wind that swayed them; once, and more
than once,

Unhoused beneath the evening star we saw
Dances of liberty, and in late hours
Of darkness, dances in the open air
Deftly prolonged, though grey-haired lookers on
Might waste their breath in chiding.

Under hills—

The vine-clad hills and slopes of Burgundy,
Upon the bosom of the gentle Saone
We glided forward with the flowing stream.
Swift Rhone! thou wert the *wings* on which we cut
A winding passage with majestic ease
Between thy lofty rocks. Enchanting show
Those woods and farms and orchards did present,
And single cottages and lurking towns,
Reach after reach, succession without end
Of deep and stately vales! A lonely pair
Of strangers, till day closed, we sailed along
Clustered together with a merry crowd
Of those emancipated, a blithe host
Of travellers, chiefly delegates, returning
From the great spousals newly solemnised
At their chief city, in the sight of Heaven.
Like bees they swarmed, gaudy and gay as bees;
Some vapoured in the unruliness of joy,
And with their swords flourished as if to fight
The saucy air. In this proud company
We landed—took with them our evening meal,
Guests welcome almost as the angels were
To Abraham of old. The supper done,
With flowing cups elate and happy thoughts

We rose at signal given, and formed a ring
And, hand in hand, danced round and round the
board;

All hearts were open, every tongue was loud
With amity and glee; we bore a name
Honoured in France, the name of Englishmen,
And hospitably did they give us hail,
As their forerunners in a glorious course;
And round and round the board we danced again.
With these blithe friends our voyage we renewed
At early dawn. The monastery bells
Made a sweet jingling in our youthful ears;
The rapid river flowing without noise,
And each uprising or receding spire
Spake with a sense of peace, at intervals
Touching the heart amid the boisterous crew
By whom we were encompassed. Taking leave
Of this glad throng, foot-travellers side by side,
Measuring our steps in quiet, we pursued
Our journey, and ere twice the sun had set
Beheld the Convent of Chartreuse, and there
Rested within an awful *solitude*:

Yes; for even then no other than a place
Of soul-affecting *solitude* appeared
That far-famed region, though our eyes had seen,
As toward the sacred mansion we advanced,
Arms flashing, and a military glare
Of riotous men commissioned to expel
The blameless inmates, and belike subvert
That frame of social being, which so long
Had bodied forth the ghostliness of things
In silence visible and perpetual calm.

—"Stay, stay your sacrilegious hands!"—The
voice

Was Nature's, uttered from her Alpine throne;
I heard it then and seem to hear it now—

"Your impious work forbear, perish what may,
Let this one temple last, be this one spot
Of earth devoted to eternity!"

She ceased to speak, but while St. Bruno's pines
Waved their dark tops, not silent as they waved,
And while below, along their several beds,
Murmured the sister streams of Life and Death,
Thus by conflicting passions pressed, my heart
Responded; "Honour to the patriot's zeal!
Glory and hope to new-born Liberty!
Hail to the mighty projects of the time!
Discerning sword that Justice wields, do thou
Go forth and prosper; and, ye purging fires,
Up to the loftiest towers of Pride ascend,
Fanned by the breath of angry Providence.
But oh! if Past and Future be the wings
On whose support harmoniously conjoined
Moves the great spirit of human knowledge, spare

These courts of mystery, where a step advanced
Between the portals of the shadowy rocks
Leaves far behind life's treacherous vanities,
For penitential tears and trembling hopes
Exchanged—to equalise in God's pure sight
Monarch and peasant: be the house redeemed
With its unworldly votaries, for the sake
Of conquest over sense, hourly achieved
Through faith and meditative reason, resting
Upon the word of heaven-imparted truth,
Calmly triumphant; and for humbler claim
Of that imaginative impulse sent
From these majestic floods, yon shining cliffs,
The untransmuted shapes of many worlds,
Cerulean ether's pure inhabitants,
These forests unapproachable by death,
That shall endure as long as man endures,
To think, to hope, to worship, and to feel,
To struggle, to be lost within himself
In trepidation, from the blank abyss
To look with bodily eyes, and be consoled."
Not seldom since that moment have I wished
That thou, O Friend! the trouble or the calm
Hadst shared, when, from profane regards apart,
In sympathetic reverence we trod
The floors of those dim cloisters, till that hour,
From their foundation, strangers to the presence
Of unrestricted and unthinking man.
Abroad, how cheeringly the sunshine lay
Upon the open lawns! Vallombre's groves
Entering, we fed the soul with darkness; thence
Issued, and with uplifted eyes beheld,
In different quarters of the bending sky,
The cross of Jesus stand erect, as if
Hands of angelic powers had fixed it there,
Memorial revered by a thousand storms;
Yet then, from the indiscriminating sweep
And rage of one State-whirlwind, insecure.

'Tis not my present purpose to retrace
That variegated journey step by step.
A march it was of military speed,
And Earth did change her images and forms
Before us, fast as clouds are changed in heaven.
Day after day, up early and down late,
From hill to vale we dropped, from vale to hill
Mounted—from province on to province swept,
Keen hunters in a chase of fourteen weeks,
Eager as birds of prey, or as a ship
Upon the stretch, when winds are blowing fair:
Sweet coverts did we cross of pastoral life,
Enticing valleys, greeted them and left
Too soon, while yet the very flash and gleam
Of salutation were not passed away.

Oh ! sorrow for the youth who could have seen
 Unchastened, unsubdued, unawed, unraised
 To patriarchal dignity of mind,
 And pure simplicity of wish and will,
 Those sanctified abodes of peaceful man,
 Pleased (though to hardship born, and compassed
 round

With danger, varying as the seasons change),
 Pleased with his daily task, or, if not pleased,
 Contented, from the moment that the dawn
 Ah ! surely not without attendant gleams
 Of soul-illumination) calls him forth
 To industry, by glistenings flung on rocks,
 Whose evening shadows lead him to repose.

Well might a stranger look with bounding heart
 Down on a green recess, the first I saw
 Of those deep haunts, an aboriginal vale,
 Quiet and lorded over and possessed
 By naked huts, wood-built, and sown like tents
 Or Indian cabins over the fresh lawns
 And by the river side.

That very day,
 From a bare ridge we also first beheld
 Unveiled the summit of Mont Blanc, and grieved
 To have a soulless image on the eye
 That had usurped upon a living thought
 That never more could be. The wondrous Vale
 Of Chamouny stretched far below, and soon
 With its dumb cataracts and streams of ice,
 A motionless array of mighty waves,
 Five rivers broad and vast, made rich amends,
 And reconciled us to realities ;
 There small birds warble from the leafy trees,
 The eagle soars high in the element,
 There doth the reaper bind the yellow sheaf,
 The maiden spread the haycock in the sun,
 While Winter like a well-tamed lion walks,
 Descending from the mountain to make sport
 Among the cottages by beds of flowers.

Whate'er in this wide circuit we beheld,
 Or heard, was fitted to our unripe state
 Of intellect and heart. With such a book
 Before our eyes, we could not choose but read
 Lessons of genuine brotherhood, the plain
 And universal reason of mankind,
 The truths of young and old. Nor, side by side
 Facing, two social pilgrims, or alone
 Each with his humour, could we fail to abound
 In dreams and fictions, pensively composed :
 Rejection taken up for pleasure's sake,
 And gilded sympathies, the willow wreath,
 And sober posies of funereal flowers,

Gathered among those solitudes sublime
 From formal gardens of the lady Sorrow,
 Did sweeten many a meditative hour.

Yet still in me with those soft luxuries
 Mixed something of stern mood, an under-thirst
 Of vigour seldom utterly allayed :
 And from that source how different a sadness
 Would issue, let one incident make known.
 When from the Vallais we had turned, and clomb
 Along the Simplon's steep and rugged road,
 Following a band of muleteers, we reached
 A halting-place, where all together took
 Their noon-tide meal. Hastily rose our guide,
 Leaving us at the board ; awhile we lingered,
 Then paced the beaten downward way that led
 Right to a rough stream's edge, and there broke
 off ;

The only track now visible was one
 That from the torrent's further brink held forth
 Conspicuous invitation to ascend
 A lofty mountain. After brief delay
 Crossing the unbridged stream, that road we took,
 And clomb with eagerness, till anxious fears
 Intruded, for we failed to overtake
 Our comrades gone before. By fortunate chance,
 While every moment added doubt to doubt,
 A peasant met us, from whose mouth we learned
 That to the spot which had perplexed us first
 We must descend, and there should find the road,
 Which in the stony channel of the stream
 Lay a few steps, and then along its banks ;
 And, that our future course, all plain to sight,
 Was downwards, with the current of that stream.
 Loth to believe what we so grieved to hear,
 For still we had hopes that pointed to the clouds,
 We questioned him again, and yet again ;
 But every word that from the peasant's lips
 Came in reply, translated by our feelings,
 Ended in this,—*that we had crossed the Alps.*

Imagination—here the Power so-called
 Through sad incompetence of human speech,
 That awful Power rose from the mind's abyss
 Like an unfathered vapour that enwraps,
 At once, some lonely traveller. I was lost ;
 Halted without an effort to break through ;
 But to my conscious soul I now can say—
 "I recognise thy glory : " in such strength
 Of usurpation, when the light of sense
 Goes out, but with a flash that has revealed
 The invisible world, doth greatness make abode,
 There harbours ; whether we be young or old,
 Our destiny, our being's heart and home,

Is with infinitude, and only there ;
 With hope it is, hope that can never die,
 Effort, and expectation, and desire,
 And something evermore about to be.
 Under such banners militant, the soul
 Seeks for no trophies, struggles for no spoils
 That may attest her prowess, blest in thoughts
 That are their own perfection and reward,
 Strong in herself and in beatitude
 That hides her, like the mighty flood of Nile
 Poured from his fount of Abyssinian clouds
 To fertilise the whole Egyptian plain.

The melancholy slackening that ensued
 Upon those tidings by the peasant given
 Was soon dislodged. Downwards we hurried fast,
 And, with the half-shaped road which we had
 missed,

Entered a narrow chasm. * The brook and road
 Were fellow-travellers in this gloomy strait,
 And with them did we journey several hours
 At a slow pace. The immeasurable height
 Of woods decaying, never to be decayed,
 The stationary blasts of waterfalls,
 And in the narrow rent at every turn
 Winds thwarting winds, bewildered and forlorn,
 The torrents shooting from the clear blue sky,
 The rocks that muttered close upon our ears,
 Black drizzling crags that spake by the way-side
 As if a voice were in them, the sick sight
 And giddy prospect of the raving stream,
 The unfettered clouds and region of the Heavens,
 Tumult and peace, the darkness and the light—
 Were all like workings of one mind, the features
 Of the same face, blossoms upon one tree ;
 Characters of the great Apocalypse,
 The types and symbols of Eternity,
 Of first, and last, and midst, and without end.

That night our lodging was a house that stood
 Alone within the valley, at a point
 Where, tumbling from aloft, a torrent swelled
 The rapid stream whose margin we had trod ;
 A dreary mansion, large beyond all need,
 With high and spacious rooms, deafened and
 stunned
 By noise of waters, making innocent sleep
 Lie melancholy among weary bones.

Uprisen betimes, our journey we renewed,
 Led by the stream, ere noon-day magnified
 Into a lordly river, broad and deep,

Dimpling along in silent majesty,
 With mountains for its neighbours, and in view
 Of distant mountains and their snowy tops,
 And thus proceeding to Locarno's Lake,
 Fit resting-place for such a visitant.
 Locarno ! spreading out in width like Heaven,
 How dost thou cleave to the poetic heart,
 Bask in the sunshine of the memory ;
 And Como ! thou, a treasure whom the earth
 Keeps to herself, confined as in a depth
 Of Abyssinian privacy. I spake
 Of thee, thy chestnut woods, and garden plots
 Of Indian corn tended by dark-eyed maids ;
 Thy lofty steepes, and pathways roofed with vines
 Winding from house to house, from town to town
 Sole link that binds them to each other ; walks,
 League after league, and cloistral avenues,
 Where silence dwells if music be not there :
 While yet a youth undisciplined in verse,
 Through fond ambition of that hour I strove
 To chant your praise ; nor can approach you now
 Ungreeted by a more melodious Song,
 Where tones of Nature smoothed by learned Art
 May flow in lasting current. Like a breeze
 Or sunbeam over your domain I passed
 In motion without pause ; but ye have left
 Your beauty with me, a serene accord
 Of forms and colours, passive, yet endowed
 In their submissiveness with power as sweet
 And gracious, almost might I dare to say,
 As virtue is, or goodness ; sweet as love,
 Or the remembrance of a generous deed,
 Or mildest visitations of pure thought,
 When God, the giver of all joy, is thanked
 Religiously, in silent blessedness ;
 Sweet as this last herself, for such it is.

With those delightful pathways we advanced,
 For two days' space, in presence of the Lake,
 That, stretching far among the Alps, assumed
 A character more stern. The second night,
 From sleep awakened, and misled by sound
 Of the church clock telling the hours with stroke
 Whose import then we had not learned, we rose
 By moonlight, doubting not that day was nigh,
 And that meanwhile, by no uncertain path,
 Along the winding margin of the lake,
 Led, as before, we should behold the scene
 Hushed in profound repose. We left the town
 Of Gravedona with this hope ; but soon
 Were lost, bewildered among woods immense,
 And on a rock sate down, to wait for day.
 An open place it was, and overlooked,
 From high, the sullen water far beneath,

* See p. 143.—Ed.

On which a dull red image of the moon
 Lay bedded, changing oftentimes its form
 Like an uneasy snake. From hour to hour
 We sate and sate, wondering, as if the night
 Had been ensnared by witchcraft. On the rock
 At last we stretched our weary limbs for sleep,
 But *could not* sleep, tormented by the stings
 Of insects, which, with noise like that of noon,
 Filled all the woods: the cry of unknown birds;
 The mountains more by blackness visible
 And their own size, than any outward light;
 The breathless wilderness of clouds; the clock
 That told, with unintelligible voice,
 The widely parted hours; the noise of streams,
 And sometimes rustling motions nigh at hand,
 That did not leave us free from personal fear;
 And, lastly, the withdrawing moon, that set
 Before us, while she still was high in heaven;—
 These were our food; and such a summer's night
 Followed that pair of golden days that shed
 On Como's Lake, and all that round it lay,
 Their fairest, softest, happiest influence.

But here I must break off, and bid farewell
 To days, each offering some new sight, or fraught
 With some untried adventure, in a course
 Prolonged till sprinklings of autumnal snow
 Checked our unwearied steps. Let this alone
 Be mentioned as a parting word, that not
 In hollow exultation, dealing out
 Hyperboles of praise comparative;
 Not rich one moment to be poor for ever;
 Not prostrate, overborne, as if the mind
 Herself were nothing, a mere pensioner
 On outward forms—did we in presence stand
 Of that magnificent region. On the front
 Of this whole Song is written that my heart
 Must, in such Temple, needs have offered up
 A different worship. Finally, whate'er

I saw, or heard, or felt, was but a stream
 That flowed into a kindred stream; a gale,
 Confederate with the current of the soul,
 To speed my voyage; every sound or sight,
 In its degree of power, administered
 To grandeur or to tenderness,—to the one
 Directly, but to tender thoughts by means
 Less often instantaneous in effect;
 Led me to these by paths that, in the main,
 Were more circuitous, but not less sure
 Duly to reach the point marked out by Heaven.

Oh, most beloved Friend! a glorious time,
 A happy time that was; triumphant looks
 Were then the common language of all eyes;
 As if awaked from sleep, the Nations hailed
 Their great expectancy: the fife of war
 Was then a spirit-stirring sound indeed,
 A blackbird's whistle in a budding grove.
 We left the Swiss exulting in the fate
 Of their near neighbours; and, when shortening
 fast

Our pilgrimage, nor distant far from home,
 We crossed the Brabant armies on the fret
 For battle in the cause of Liberty.
 A stripling, scarcely of the household then
 Of social life, I looked upon these things
 As from a distance; heard, and saw, and felt,
 Was touched, but with no intimate concern;
 I seemed to move along them, as a bird
 Moves through the air, or as a fish pursues
 Its sport, or feeds in its proper element;
 I wanted not that joy, I did not need
 Such help; the ever-living universe,
 Turn where I might, was opening out its glories,
 And the independent spirit of pure youth
 Called forth, at every season, new delights
 Spread round my steps like sunshine o'er green
 fields.

BOOK SEVENTH.

RESIDENCE IN LONDON.

SIX changeful years have vanished since I first
 Poured out (saluted by that quickening breeze
 Which met me issuing from the City's * walls)
 A glad preamble to this Verse: I sang
 Aloud, with fervour irresistible
 Of short-lived transport, like a torrent bursting,
 From a black thunder-cloud, down Scaffell's side
 To rush and disappear. But soon broke forth
 (So willed the Muse) a less impetuous stream,
 That flowed awhile with unabating strength,
 Then stopped for years; not audible again
 Before last primrose-time. Belovèd Friend!
 The assurance which then cheered some heavy
 thoughts

On thy departure to a foreign land
 Has failed; too slowly moves the promised work.
 Through the whole summer have I been at rest,
 Partly from voluntary holiday,
 And part through outward hindrance. But I heard,
 After the hour of sunset yester-even,
 Sitting within doors between light and dark,
 A choir of red-breasts gathered somewhere near
 My threshold,—minstrels from the distant woods
 Sent in on Winter's service, to announce,
 With preparation artful and benign,
 That the rough lord had left the surly North
 On his accustomed journey. The delight,
 Due to this timely notice, unawares
 Smote me, and, listening, I in whispers said,
 "Ye heartsome Choristers, ye and I will be
 Associates, and, unscared by blustering winds,
 Will chant together." Thereafter, as the shades
 Of twilight deepened, going forth, I spied
 A glow-worm underneath a dusky plume
 Or canopy of yet unwithered fern,
 Clear-shining, like a hermit's taper seen
 Through a thick forest. Silence touched me here
 No less than sound had done before; the child
 Of Summer, lingering, shining, by herself,
 The voiceless worm on the unfrequented hills,
 Seemed sent on the same errand with the choir
 Of Winter that had warbled at my door,
 And the whole year breathed tenderness and love.

The last night's genial feeling overflowed
 Upon this morning, and my favourite grove,
 Tossing in sunshine its dark boughs aloft,
 As if to make the strong wind visible,
 Wakes in me agitations like its own,
 A spirit friendly to the Poet's task,
 Which we will now resume with lively hope,
 Nor checked by aught of tamer argument
 That lies before us, needful to be told.

Returned from that excursion,* soon I bade
 Farewell for ever to the sheltered seats
 Of gownèd students, quitted hall and bower,
 And every comfort of that privileged ground,
 Well pleased to pitch a vagrant tent among
 The unfenced regions of society.

Yet, undetermined to what course of life
 I should adhere, and seeming to possess
 A little space of intermediate time
 At full command, to London first I turned,
 In no disturbance of excessive hope,
 By personal ambition unenslaved,
 Frugal as there was need, and, though self-willed,
 From dangerous passions free. Three years had
 flown

Since I had felt in heart and soul the shock
 Of the huge town's first presence, and had paced
 Her endless streets, a transient visitant:
 Now, fixed amid that concourse of mankind
 Where Pleasure whirls about incessantly,
 And life and labour seem but one, I filled
 An idler's place; an idler well content
 To have a house (what matter for a home?)
 That owned him; living cheerfully abroad
 With unchecked fancy ever on the stir,
 And all my young affections out of doors.

There was a time when whatsoe'er is feigned
 Of airy palaces, and gardens built
 By Genii of romance; or hath in grave
 Authentic history been set forth of Rome,
 Alcaïro, Babylon, or Persepolis;
 Or given upon report by pilgrim friars,
 Of golden cities ten months' journey deep
 Among Tartarian wilds—fell short, far short,

* The City of Goslar, in Lower Saxony.—Ed.

* See p. 477.—Ed.

Of what my fond simplicity believed
 And thought of London—held me by a chain
 Less strong of wonder and obscure delight.
 Whether the bolt of childhood's Fancy shot
 For me beyond its ordinary mark,
 'Twere vain to ask ; but in our flock of boys
 Was One, a cripple from his birth, whom chance
 Summoned from school to London ; fortunate
 And envied traveller ! When the Boy returned,
 After short absence, curiously I scanned
 His mien and person, nor was free, in sooth,
 From disappointment, not to find some change
 In look and air, from that new region brought,
 As if from Fairy-land. Much I questioned him ;
 And every word he uttered, on my ears
 Fell flatter than a caged parrot's note,
 That answers unexpectedly awry,
 And mocks the prompter's listening. Marvellous
 things

Had vanity (quick Spirit that appears
 Almost as deeply seated and as strong
 In a Child's heart as fear itself) conceived
 For my enjoyment. Would that I could now
 Recal what then I pictured to myself,
 Of mitred Prelates, Lords in ermine clad,
 The King, and the King's Palace, and, not last,
 Nor least, Heaven bless him! the renowned Lord
 Mayor :

Dreams not unlike to those which once begat
 A change of purpose in young Whittington,
 When he, a friendless and a drooping boy,
 Sate on a stone, and heard the bells speak out
 Articulate music. Above all, one thought
 Baffled my understanding : how men lived
 Even next-door neighbours, as we say, yet still
 Strangers, not knowing each the other's name.

O, wond'rous power of words, by simple faith
 Licensed to take the meaning that we love !
 Vauxhall and Ranelagh ! I then had heard
 Of your green groves, and wilderness of lamps
 Dimming the stars, and fireworks magical,
 And gorgeous ladies, under splendid domes,
 Floating in dance, or warbling high in air
 The songs of spirits ! Nor had Fancy fed
 With less delight upon that other class
 Of marvels, broad-day wonders permanent :
 The River proudly bridged ; the dizzy top
 And Whispering Gallery of St. Paul's ; the tombs
 Of Westminster ; the Giants of Guildhall ;
 Bedlam, and those carved maniacs at the gates,
 Perpetually recumbent ; Statues—man,
 And the horse under him—in gilded pomp
 Adorning flowery gardens, 'mid vast squares ;

The Monument, and that Chamber of the Tower
 Where England's sovereigns sit in long array,
 Their steeds bestriding,—every mimic shape
 Cased in the gleaming mail the monarch wore,
 Whether for gorgeous tournament addressed,
 Or life or death upon the battle-field.
 Those bold imaginations in due time
 Had vanished, leaving others in their stead :
 And now I looked upon the living scene ;
 Familiarly perused it ; oftentimes,
 In spite of strongest disappointment, pleased
 Through courteous self-submission, as a tax
 Paid to the object by prescriptive right.

Rise up, thou monstrous ant-hill on the plain
 Of a too busy world ! Before me flow,
 Thou endless stream of men and moving things !
 Thy every-day appearance, as it strikes—
 With wonder heightened, or sublimed by awe—
 On strangers, of all ages ; the quick dance
 Of colours, lights, and forms ; the deafening din ;
 The comers and the goers face to face,
 Face after face ; the string of dazzling wares,
 Shop after shop, with symbols, blazoned names,
 And all the tradesman's honours overhead :
 Here, fronts of houses, like a title-page,
 With letters huge inscribed from top to toe,
 Stationed above the door, like guardian saints ;
 There, allegoric shapes, female or male,
 Or physiognomies of real men,
 Land-warriors, kings, or admirals of the sea,
 Boyle, Shakspeare, Newton, or the attractive head
 Of some quack-doctor, famous in his day.

Meanwhile the roar continues, till at length,
 Escaped as from an enemy, we turn
 Abruptly into some sequestered nook,
 Still as a sheltered place when winds blow
 loud !

At leisure, thence, through tracts of thin resort,
 And sights and sounds that come at intervals,
 We take our way. A raree-show is here,
 With children gathered round ; another street
 Presents a company of dancing dogs,
 Or dromedary, with an antic pair
 Of monkeys on his back ; a minstrel band
 Of Savoyards ; or, single and alone,
 An English ballad-singer. Private courts,
 Gloomy as coffins, and unsightly lanes
 Thrilled by some female vendor's scream, belike
 The very shrillest of all London cries,
 May then entangle our impatient steps ;
 Conducted through those labyrinths, unawares,
 To privileged regions and inviolate,

Where from their airy lodges studious lawyers
Look out on waters, walks, and gardens green.

Thence back into the throng, until we reach,
Following the tide that slackens by degrees,
Some half-frequented scene, where wider streets
Bring straggling breezes of suburban air.
Here files of ballads dangle from dead walls ;
Advertisements, of giant-size, from high
Press forward, in all colours, on the sight ;
These, bold in conscious merit, lower down ;
That, fronted with a most imposing word,
Is, peradventure, one in masquerade.
As on the broadening causeway we advance,
Behold, turned upwards, a face hard and strong
In lineaments, and red with over-toil.
'Tis one encountered here and everywhere ;
A travelling cripple, by the trunk cut short,
And stumping on his arms. In sailor's garb
Another lies at length, beside a range
Of well-formed characters, with chalk inscribed
Upon the smooth flat stones : the Nurse is here,
The Bachelor, that loves to sun himself,
The military Idler, and the Dame,
That field-ward takes her walk with decent steps.

Now homeward through the thickening hubbub,
where
See, among less distinguishable shapes,
The begging scavenger, with hat in hand ;
The Italian, as he thrids his way with care,
Steadying, far-seen, a frame of images
Upon his head ; with basket at his breast
The Jew ; the stately and slow-moving Turk,
With freight of slippers piled beneath his arm !

Enough ;—the mighty concourse I surveyed
With no unthinking mind, well pleased to note
Among the crowd all specimens of man,
Through all the colours which the sun bestows,
And every character of form and face :
The Swede, the Russian ; from the genial south,
The Frenchman and the Spaniard ; from remote
America, the Hunter-Indian ; Moors,
Malays, Lascars, the Tartar, the Chinese,
And Negro Ladies in white muslin gowns.

At leisure, then, I viewed, from day to day,
The spectacles within doors,—birds and beasts
Of every nature, and strange plants convened
From every clime ; and, next, those sights that ape
The absolute presence of reality,
Expressing, as in mirror, sea and land,
And what earth is, and what she has to show.

I do not here allude to subtlest craft,
By means refined attaining purest ends,
But imitations, fondly made in plain
Confession of man's weakness and his loves.
Whether the Painter, whose ambitious skill
Submits to nothing less than taking in
A whole horizon's circuit, do with power,
Like that of angels or commissioned spirits,
Fix us upon some lofty pinnacle,
Or in a ship on waters, with a world
Of life, and life-like mockery beneath,
Above, behind, far stretching and before ;
Or more mechanic artist represent
By scale exact, in model, wood or clay,
From blended colours also borrowing help,
Some miniature of famous spots or things,—
St. Peter's Church ; or, more aspiring aim,
In microscopic vision, Rome herself ;
Or, haply, some choice rural haunt,—the Falls
Of Tivoli ; and, high upon that steep,
The Sibyl's mouldering Temple ! every tree,
Villa, or cottage, lurking among rocks
Throughout the landscape ; tuft, stone scratch
minute—
All that the traveller sees when he is there.

Add to these exhibitions, mute and still,
Others of wider scope, where living men,
Music, and shifting pantomimic scenes,
Diversified the allurements. Need I fear
To mention by its name, as in degree,
Lowest of these and humblest in attempt,
Yet richly graced with honours of her own,
Half-rural Sadler's Wells ? Though at that time
Intolerant, as is the way of youth
Unless itself be pleased, here more than once
Taking my seat, I saw (nor blush to add,
With ample recompense) giants and dwarfs,
Clowns, conjurors, posture-masters, harlequins,
Amid the uproar of the rattlement,
Perform their feats. Nor was it mean delight
To watch crude Nature work in untaught minds ;
To note the laws and progress of belief ;
Though obstinate on this way, yet on that
How willingly we travel, and how far !
To have, for instance, brought upon the scene
The champion, Jack the Giant-killer : Lo !
He dons his coat of darkness ; on the stage
Walks, and achieves his wonders, from the eye
Of living Mortal covert, "as the moon
Hid in her vacant interlunar cave."
Delusion bold ! and how can it be wrought ?
The garb he wears is black as death, the word
"Invisible" flames forth upon his chest.

Here, too, were "forms and pressures of the time,"

tough, bold, as Grecian comedy displayed
When Art was young; dramas of living men,
and recent things yet warm with life; a sea-fight,
hipwreck, or some domestic incident
divulged by Truth and magnified by Fame;
such as the daring brotherhood of late
set forth, too serious theme for that light place—
mean, O distant Friend! a story drawn
from our own ground,—the Maid of Buttermere,—
and how, unfaithful to a virtuous wife
deserted and deceived, the Spoiler came
and wooed the artless daughter of the hills,
and wedded her, in cruel mockery
of love and marriage bonds. These words to thee
must needs bring back the moment when we first,
ere the broad world rang with the maiden's name,
beheld her serving at the cottage inn;
both stricken, as she entered or withdrew,
With admiration of her modest mien
and carriage, marked by unexampled grace.
Ve since that time not unfamiliarly
have seen her,—her discretion have observed,
her just opinions, delicate reserve,
her patience, and humility of mind
unspoiled by commendation and the excess
of public notice—an offensive light
to a meek spirit suffering inwardly.

From this memorial tribute to my theme
was returning, when, with sundry forms
commingled—shapes which met me in the way
that we must tread—thy image rose again,
Maid of Buttermere! She lives in peace
Upon the spot where she was born and reared;
Without contamination doth she live
in quietness, without anxiety:
Beside the mountain chapel, sleeps in earth
her new-born infant, fearless as a lamb
that, thither driven from some unsheltered place,
rests underneath the little rock-like pile
When storms are raging. Happy are they both—
Mother and child!—These feelings, in themselves
bright, do yet scarcely seem so when I think
in those ingenuous moments of our youth
we have learnt by use to slight the crimes
and sorrows of the world. Those simple days
are now my theme; and, foremost of the scenes,
Which yet survive in memory, appears
one, at whose centre sate a lovely Boy,
a sportive infant, who, for six months' space,
not more, had been of age to deal about
articulate prattle—Child as beautiful

As ever clung around a mother's neck,
Or father fondly gazed upon with pride.
There, too, conspicuous for stature tall
And large dark eyes, beside her infant stood
The mother; but, upon her cheeks diffused,
False tints too well accorded with the glare
From play-house lustres thrown without reserve
On every object near. The Boy had been
The pride and pleasure of all lookers-on
In whatsoever place, but seemed in this
A sort of alien scattered from the clouds.
Of lusty vigour, more than infantine
He was in limb, in cheek a summer rose
Just three parts blown—a cottage-child—if e'er,
By cottage-door on breezy mountain side,
Or in some sheltering vale, was seen a babe
By Nature's gifts so favoured. Upon a board
Decked with refreshments had this child been
placed,

His little stage in the vast theatre,
And there he sate surrounded with a throng
Of chance spectators, chiefly dissolute men
And shameless women, treated and caressed;
Ate, drank, and with the fruit and glasses played,
While oaths and laughter and indecent speech
Were rife about him as the songs of birds
Contending after showers. The mother now
Is fading out of memory, but I see
The lovely Boy as I beheld him then
Among the wretched and the falsely gay,
Like one of those who walked with hair unsinged
Amid the fiery furnace. Charms and spells
Muttered on black and spiteful instigation
Have stopped, as some believe, the kindest
growths.

Ah, with how different spirit might a prayer
Have been preferred, that this fair creature,
checked

By special privilege of Nature's love,
Should in his childhood be detained for ever!
But with its universal freight the tide
Hath rolled along, and this bright innocent,
Mary! may now have lived till he could look
With envy on thy nameless babe that sleeps,
Beside the mountain chapel, undisturbed.

Four rapid years had scarcely then been told
Since, travelling southward from our pastoral hills,
I heard, and for the first time in my life,
The voice of woman utter blasphemy—
Saw woman as she is, to open shame
Abandoned, and the pride of public vice;
I shuddered, for a barrier seemed at once
Thrown in that from humanity divorced

Humanity, splitting the race of man
 In twain, yet leaving the same outward form.
 Distress of mind ensued upon the sight,
 And ardent meditation. Later years
 Brought to such spectacle a milder sadness,
 Feelings of pure commiseration, grief
 For the individual and the overthrow
 Of her soul's beauty ; farther I was then
 But seldom led, or wished to go ; in truth
 The sorrow of the passion stopped me there.

But let me now, less moved, in order take
 Our argument. Enough is said to show
 How casual incidents of real life,
 Observed where pastime only had been sought,
 Outweighed, or put to flight, the set events
 And measured passions of the stage, albeit
 By Siddons trod in the fulness of her power.
 Yet was the theatre my dear delight ;
 The very gilding, lamps and painted scrolls,
 And all the mean upholstery of the place,
 Wanted not animation, when the tide
 Of pleasure ebbed but to return as fast
 With the ever-shifting figures of the scene,
 Solemn or gay : whether some beauteous dame
 Advanced in radiance through a deep recess
 Of thick entangled forest, like the moon
 Opening the clouds ; or sovereign king, announced
 With flourishing trumpet, came in full-blown state
 Of the world's greatness, winding round with train
 Of courtiers, banners, and a length of guards ;
 Or captive led in abject weeds, and jingling
 His slender manacles ; or romping girl
 Bounced, leapt, and pawed the air ; or mumbling
 sire,

A scare-crow pattern of old age dressed up
 In all the tatters of infirmity
 All loosely put together, hobbled in,
 Stumping upon a cane with which he smites,
 From time to time, the solid boards, and makes
 them

Prate somewhat loudly of the whereabouts
 Of one so overloaded with his years.
 But what of this ! the laugh, the grin, grimace,
 The antics striving to outstrip each other,
 Were all received, the least of them not lost,
 With an unmeasured welcome. Through the night,
 Between the show, and many-headed mass
 Of the spectators, and each several nook
 Filled with its fray or brawl, how eagerly
 And with what flashes, as it were, the mind
 Turned this way—that way ! sportive and alert
 And watchful, as a kitten when at play,
 While winds are eddying round her, among straws

And rustling leaves. Enchanting age and sweet !
 Romantic almost, looked at through a space,
 How small, of intervening years ! For then,
 Though surely no mean progress had been made
 In meditations holy and sublime,
 Yet something of a girlish child-like gloss
 Of novelty survived for scenes like these ;
 Enjoyment haply handed down from times
 When at a country-playhouse, some rude barn
 Tricked out for that proud use, if I perchance
 Caught, on a summer evening through a chink
 In the old wall, an unexpected glimpse
 Of daylight, the bare thought of where I was
 Gladdened me more than if I had been led
 Into a dazzling cavern of romance,
 Crowded with Genii busy among works
 Not to be looked at by the common sun.

The matter that detains us now may seem,
 To many, neither dignified enough
 Nor arduous, yet will not be scorned by them,
 Who, looking inward, have observed the ties
 That bind the perishable hours of life
 Each to the other, and the curious props
 By which the world of memory and thought
 Exists and is sustained. More lofty themes,
 Such as at least do wear a prouder face,
 Solicit our regard ; but when I think
 Of these, I feel the imaginative power
 Languish within me ; even then it slept,
 When, pressed by tragic sufferings, the heart
 Was more than full ; amid my sobs and tears
 It slept, even in the pregnant season of youth.
 For though I was most passionately moved
 And yielded to all changes of the scene
 With an obsequious promptness, yet the storm
 Passed not beyond the suburbs of the mind ;
 Save when realities of act and mien,
 The incarnation of the spirits that move
 In harmony amid the Poet's world,
 Rose to ideal grandeur, or, called forth
 By power of contrast, made me recognise,
 As at a glance, the things which I had shaped,
 And yet not shaped, had seen and scarcely seen,
 When, having closed the mighty Shakspeare's page,
 I mused, and thought, and felt, in solitude.

Pass we from entertainments, that are such
 Professedly, to others titled higher,
 Yet, in the estimate of youth at least,
 More near akin to those than names imply,—
 I mean the brawls of lawyers in their courts
 Before the ermined judge, or that great stage
 Where senators, tongue-favoured men, perform,

Admired and envied. Oh! the beating heart,
 When one among the prime of these rose up,—
 One, of whose name from childhood we had heard
 Familiarly, a household term, like those,
 The Bedfords, Glosters, Salsburys, of old
 Whom the fifth Harry talks of. Silence! hush!
 This is no trifler, no short-flighted wit,
 No stammerer of a minute, painfully
 Delivered. No! the Orator hath yoked
 The Hours, like young Aurora, to his car:
 Thrice welcome Presence! how can patience e'er
 Grow weary of attending on a track
 That kindles with such glory! All are charmed,
 Astonished; like a hero in romance,
 He winds away his never-ending horn;
 Words follow words, sense seems to follow sense:
 What memory and what logic! till the strain
 Transcendent, superhuman as it seemed,
 Grows tedious even in a young man's ear.

Genius of Burke! forgive the pen seduced
 By specious wonders, and too slow to tell
 Of what the ingenuous, what bewildered men,
 Beginning to mistrust their boastful guides,
 And wise men, willing to grow wiser, caught,
 Rapt auditors! from thy most eloquent tongue—
 Now mute, for ever mute in the cold grave.
 I see him,—old, but vigorous in age,—
 Stand like an oak whose stag-horn branches start
 Out of its leafy brow, the more to awe
 The younger brethren of the grove. But some—
 While he forewarns, denounces, launches forth,
 Against all systems built on abstract rights,
 Keen ridicule; the majestic proclaims
 Of Institutes and Laws, hallowed by time;
 Declares the vital power of social ties
 Endeared by Custom; and with high disdain,
 Exploding upstart Theory, insists
 Upon the allegiance to which men are born—
 Some—say at once a froward multitude—
 Murmur (for truth is hated, where not loved)
 As the winds fret within the Æolian cave,
 Galled by their monarch's chain. The times were
 big
 With ominous change, which, night by night, pro-
 voked
 Keen struggles, and black clouds of passion raised;
 But memorable moments intervened,
 When Wisdom, like the Goddess from Jove's brain,
 Broke forth in armour of resplendent words,
 Startling the Synod. Could a youth, and one
 In ancient story versed, whose breast had heaved
 Under the weight of classic eloquence,
 Sit, see, and hear, unthankful, uninspired?

Nor did the Pulpit's oratory fail
 To achieve its higher triumph. Not unfelt
 Were its admonishments, nor lightly heard
 The awful truths delivered thence by tongues
 Endowed with various power to search the soul;
 Yet ostentation, domineering, oft
 Poured forth harangues, how sadly out of place!—
 There have I seen a comely bachelor,
 Fresh from a toilette of two hours, ascend
 His rostrum, with seraphic glance look up,
 And, in a tone elaborately low
 Beginning, lead his voice through many a maze
 A minuet course; and, winding up his mouth,
 From time to time, into an orifice
 Most delicate, a lurking eyelet, small,
 And only not invisible, again
 Open it out, diffusing thence a smile
 Of rapt irradiation, exquisite.
 Meanwhile the Evangelists, Isaiah, Job,
 Moses, and he who penned, the other day,
 The Death of Abel, Shakspeare, and the Bard
 Whose genius spangled o'er a gloomy theme
 With fancies thick as his inspiring stars,
 And Ossian (doubt not—'tis the naked truth)
 Summoned from streamy Morven—each and all
 Would, in their turns, lend ornaments and flowers
 To entwine the crook of eloquence that helped
 This pretty Shepherd, pride of all the plains,
 To rule and guide his captivated flock.

I glance but at a few conspicuous marks,
 Leaving a thousand others, that, in hall,
 Court, theatre, conventicle, or shop,
 In public room or private, park or street,
 Each fondly reared on his own pedestal,
 Looked out for admiration. Folly, vice,
 Extravagance in gesture, mien, and dress,
 And all the strife of singularity,
 Lies to the ear, and lies to every sense—
 Of these, and of the living shapes they wear,
 There is no end. Such candidates for regard,
 Although well pleased to be where they were
 found,

I did not hunt after, nor greatly prize,
 Nor made unto myself a secret boast
 Of reading them with quick and curious eye;
 But, as a common produce, things that are
 To-day, to-morrow will be, took of them
 Such willing note, as, on some errand bound
 That asks not speed, a traveller might bestow
 On sea-shells that bestrew the sandy beach,
 Or daisies swarming through the fields of June.

But foolishness and madness in parade,

Though most at home in this their dear domain,
 Are scattered everywhere, no rarities,
 Even to the rudest novice of the Schools.
 Me, rather, it employed, to note, and keep
 In memory, those individual sights
 Of courage, or integrity, or truth,
 Or tenderness, which there, set off by foil,
 Appeared more touching. One will I select;
 A Father—for he bore that sacred name—
 Him saw I, sitting in an open square,
 Upon a corner-stone of that low wall,
 Wherein were fixed the iron pales that fenced
 A spacious grass-plot; there, in silence, sate
 This One Man, with a sickly babe outstretched
 Upon his knee, whom he had thither brought
 For sunshine, and to breathe the fresher air.
 Of those who passed, and me who looked at him,
 He took no heed; but in his brawny arms
 (The Artificer was to the elbow bare,
 And from his work this moment had been stolen)
 He held the child, and, bending over it,
 As if he were afraid both of the sun
 And of the air, which he had come to seek,
 Eyed the poor babe with love unutterable.

As the black storm upon the mountain top
 Sets off the sunbeam in the valley, so
 That huge fermenting mass of human-kind
 Serves as a solemn back-ground, or relief,
 To single forms and objects, whence they draw,
 For feeling and contemplative regard,
 More than inherent liveliness and power.
 How oft, amid those overflowing streets,
 Have I gone forward with the crowd, and said
 Unto myself, "The face of every one
 That passes by me is a mystery!"
 Thus have I looked, nor ceased to look, oppressed
 By thoughts of what and whither, when and how,
 Until the shapes before my eyes became
 A second-sight procession, such as glides
 Over still mountains, or appears in dreams;
 And once, far-travelled in such mood, beyond
 The reach of common indication, lost
 Amid the moving pageant, I was smitten
 Abruptly, with the view (a sight not rare)
 Of a blind Beggar, who, with upright face,
 Stood, propped against a wall, upon his chest
 Wearing a written paper, to explain
 His story, whence he came, and who he was.
 Caught by the spectacle my mind turned round
 As with the might of waters; and apt type
 This label seemed of the utmost we can know,
 Both of ourselves and of the universe;
 And, on the shape of that unmoving man,

His steadfast face and sightless eyes, I gazed,
 As if admonished from another world.

Though reared upon the base of outward things,
 Structures like these the excited spirit mainly
 Builds for herself; scenes different there are,
 Full-formed, that take, with small internal help,
 Possession of the faculties,—the peace
 That comes with night; the deep solemnity
 Of nature's intermediate hours of rest,
 When the great tide of human life stands still;
 The business of the day to come, unborn,
 Of that gone by, locked up, as in the grave;
 The blended calmness of the heavens and earth,
 Moonlight and stars, and empty streets, and
 sounds,

Unfrequent as in deserts; at late hours
 Of winter evenings, when unwholesome rains
 Are falling hard, with people yet astir,
 The feeble salutation from the voice
 Of some unhappy woman, now and then
 Heard as we pass, when no one looks about,
 Nothing is listened to. But these, I fear,
 Are falsely catalogued; things that are, are not,
 As the mind answers to them, or the heart
 Is prompt, or slow, to feel. What say you, then,
 To times, when half the city shall break out
 Full of one passion, vengeance, rage, or fear?
 To executions, to a street on fire,
 Mobs, riots, or rejoicings? From these sights
 Take one,—that ancient festival, the Fair,
 Holden where martyrs suffered in past time,
 And named of St. Bartholomew; there, see
 A work completed to our hands, that lays,
 If any spectacle on earth can do,
 The whole creative powers of man asleep!—
 For once, the Muse's help will we implore,
 And she shall lodge us, wafted on her wings,
 Above the press and danger of the crowd,
 Upon some showman's platform. What a shock
 For eyes and ears! what anarchy and din,
 Barbarian and infernal,—a phantasma,
 Monstrous in colour, motion, shape, sight, sound!
 Below, the open space, through every nook
 Of the wide area, twinkles, is alive
 With heads; the midway region, and above,
 Is thronged with staring pictures and huge scrolls,
 Dumb proclamations of the Prodigies;
 With chattering monkeys dangling from their
 poles,
 And children whirling in their roundabouts;
 With those that stretch the neck and strain the
 eyes,
 And crack the voice in rivalry, the crowd

Inviting ; with buffoons against buffoons
 Grimacing, writhing, screaming,—him who grinds
 The hurdy-gurdy, at the fiddle weaves,
 Rattles the salt-box, thumps the kettle-drum,
 And him who at the trumpet puffs his cheeks,
 The silver-collared Negro with his timbrel,
 Equestrians, tumblers, women, girls, and boys,
 Blue-breeched, pink-vested, with high-towering
 plumes.—

All moveables of wonder, from all parts,
 Are here—Albinos, painted Indians, Dwarfs,
 The Horse of knowledge, and the learned Pig,
 The Stone-eater, the man that swallows fire,
 Giants, Ventriloquists, the Invisible Girl,
 The Bust that speaks and moves its goggling eyes,
 The Wax-work, Clock-work, all the marvellous
 craft

Of modern Merlins, Wild Beasts, Puppet-shows,
 All out-o'-the way, far-fetched, perverted things,
 All freaks of nature, all Promethean thoughts
 Of man, his dullness, madness, and their feats
 All jumbled up together, to compose
 A Parliament of Monsters. Tents and Booths
 Meanwhile, as if the whole were one vast mill,
 Are vomiting, receiving on all sides,
 Men, Women, three-years' Children, Babes in arms.

Oh, blank confusion ! true epitome
 Of what the mighty City is herself,
 To thousands upon thousands of her sons,
 Living amid the same perpetual whirl
 Of trivial objects, melted and reduced
 To one identity, by differences
 That have no law, no meaning, and no end—
 Oppression, under which even highest minds
 Must labour, whence the strongest are not free.
 But though the picture weary out the eye,
 By nature an unmanageable sight,
 It is not wholly so to him who looks

In steadiness, who hath among least things
 An under-sense of greatest ; sees the parts
 As parts, but with a feeling of the whole.
 This, of all acquisitions, first awaits
 On sundry and most widely different modes
 Of education, nor with least delight
 On that through which I passed. Attention springs,
 And comprehensiveness and memory flow.
 From early converse with the works of God
 Among all regions ; chiefly where appear
 Most obviously simplicity and power.
 Think, how the everlasting streams and woods,
 Stretched and still stretching far and wide, exalt
 The roving Indian, on his desert sands :
 What grandeur not unfelt, what pregnant show
 Of beauty, meets the sun-burnt Arab's eye :
 And, as the sea propels, from zone to zone,
 Its currents ; magnifies its shoals of life
 Beyond all compass ; spreads, and sends aloft
 Armies of clouds,—even so, its powers and aspects
 Shape for mankind, by principles as fixed,
 The views and aspirations of the soul
 To majesty. Like virtue have the forms
 Perennial of the ancient hills ; nor less
 The changeful language of their countenances
 Quickens the slumbering mind, and aids the
 thoughts,

However multitudinous, to move
 With order and relation. This, if still,
 As hitherto, in freedom I may speak,
 Not violating any just restraint,
 As may be hoped, of real modesty,—
 This did I feel, in London's vast domain.
 The Spirit of Nature was upon me there ;
 The soul of Beauty and enduring Life
 Vouchsafed her inspiration, and diffused,
 Through meagre lines and colours, and the press
 Of self-destroying, transitory things,
 Composure, and ennobling Harmony.

BOOK EIGHTH.

RETROSPECT.—LOVE OF NATURE
LEADING TO LOVE OF MAN.

WHAT sounds are those, Helvellyn, that are heard
Up to thy summit, through the depth of air
Ascending, as if distance had the power
To make the sounds more audible? What crowd
Covers, or sprinkles o'er, yon village green?
Crowd seems it, solitary hill! to thee,
Though but a little family of men,
Shepherds and tillers of the ground—betimes
Assembled with their children and their wives,
And here and there a stranger interspersed.
They hold a rustic fair—a festival,
Such as, on this side now, and now on that,
Repeated through his tributary vales,
Helvellyn, in the silence of his rest,
Sees annually, if clouds towards either ocean
Blown from their favourite resting place, or mists
Dissolved, have left him an unshrouded head.
Delightful day it is for all who dwell
In this secluded glen, and eagerly
They give it welcome. Long ere heat of noon,
From byre or field the kine were brought; the
sheep

Are penned in cotes; the chaffering is begun.
The heifer lows, uneasy at the voice
Of a new master; bleat the flocks aloud.
Booths are there none; a stall or two is here;
A lame man or a blind, the one to beg,
The other to make music; hither, too,
From far, with basket, slung upon her arm,
Of hawk's wares—books, pictures, combs, and
pins—

Some aged woman finds her way again,
Year after year, a punctual visitant!
There also stands a speech-maker by rote,
Pulling the strings of his boxed raree-show;
And in the lapse of many years may come
Prouder itinerant, mountebank, or he
Whose wonders in a covered wain lie hid.
But one there is, the loveliest of them all,
Some sweet lass of the valley, looking out
For gains, and who that sees her would not buy?
Fruits of her father's orchard, are her wares,
And with the ruddy produce, she walks round
Among the crowd, half pleased with, half ashamed

Of her new office, blushing restlessly.
The children now are rich, for the old to-day
Are generous as the young; and, if content
With looking on, some ancient wedded pair
Sit in the shade together, while they gaze,
“A cheerful smile unbends the wrinkled brow,
The days departed start again to life,
And all the scenes of childhood reappear,
Faint, but more tranquil, like the changing sun
To him who slept at noon and wakes at eve.”
Thus gaiety and cheerfulness prevail,
Spreading from young to old, from old to young,
And no one seems to want his share.—Immense
Is the recess, the circumambient world
Magnificent, by which they are embraced:
They move about upon the soft green turf:
How little they, they and their doings, seem,
And all that they can further or obstruct!
Through utter weakness pitifully dear,
As tender infants are: and yet how great!
For all things serve them: them the morning light
Loves, as it glistens on the silent rocks;
And then the silent rocks, which now from high
Look down upon them; the reposing clouds;
The wild brooks prattling from invisible haunts;
And old Helvellyn, conscious of the stir
Which animates this day their calm abode.

With deep devotion, Nature, did I feel,
In that enormous City's turbulent world
Of men and things, what benefit I owed
To thee, and those domains of rural peace,
Where to the sense of beauty first my heart
Was opened; tract more exquisitely fair
Than that famed paradise of ten thousand trees,
Or Gehol's matchless gardens, for delight
Of the Tartarian dynasty composed
(Beyond that mighty wall, not fabulous,
China's stupendous mound) by patient toil
Of myriads and boon nature's lavish help;
There, in a clime from widest empire chosen,
Fulfilling (could enchantment have done more?)
A sumptuous dream of flowery lawns, with domes
Of pleasure sprinkled over, shady dells

* These lines are from a descriptive Poem—“Malvern Hills”—by one of Mr. Wordsworth's oldest friends, Mr. Joseph Cottle.—*Ed.*

For eastern monasteries, sunny mounts
 With temples crested, bridges, gondolas,
 Rocks, dens, and groves of foliage taught to melt
 Into each other their obsequious hues,
 Vanished and vanishing in subtle chase,
 Too fine to be pursued; or standing forth
 In no discordant opposition, strong
 And gorgeous as the colours side by side
 Bedded among rich plumes of tropic birds;
 And mountains over all, embracing all;
 And all the landscape, endlessly enriched
 With waters running, falling, or asleep.

But lovelier far than this, the paradise
 Where I was reared; in Nature's primitive gifts
 Favoured no less, and more to every sense
 Delicious, seeing that the sun and sky,
 The elements, and seasons as they change,
 Do find a worthy fellow-labourer there—
 Man free, man working for himself, with choice
 Of time, and place, and object; by his wants,
 His comforts, native occupations, cares,
 Cheerfully led to individual ends
 Or social, and still followed by a train
 Unwooded, unthought-of even—simplicity,
 And beauty, and inevitable grace.

Yea, when a glimpse of those imperial bowers
 Would to a child be transport over-great,
 When but a half-hour's roam through such a place
 Would leave behind a dance of images,
 That shall break in upon his sleep for weeks;
 Even then the common haunts of the green earth,
 And ordinary interests of man,
 Which they embosom, all without regard
 As both may seem, are fastening on the heart
 Insensibly, each with the other's help.
 For me, when my affections first were led
 From kindred, friends, and playmates, to partake
 Love for the human creature's absolute self,
 That noticeable kindness of heart
 Sprang out of fountains, there abounding most,
 Where sovereign Nature dictated the tasks
 And occupations which her beauty adorned,
 And Shepherds were the men that pleased me
 first;

Not such as Saturn ruled 'mid Latian wilds,
 With arts and laws so tempered, that their lives
 Left, even to us toiling in this late day,
 A bright tradition of the golden age;
 Not such as, 'mid Arcadian fastnesses
 Sequestered, handed down among themselves
 Felicity, in Grecian song renowned;
 Nor such as—when an adverse fate had driven,

From house and home, the courtly band whose
 fortunes

Entered, with Shakspeare's genius, the wild woods
 Of Arden—amid sunshine or in shade
 Culled the best fruits of Time's uncouth hours,
 Ere Phœbe sighed for the false Ganymede;
 Or there where Perdita and Florizel
 Together danced, Queen of the feast, and King;
 Nor such as Spenser fabled. True it is,
 That I had heard (what he perhaps had seen)
 Of maids at sunrise bringing in from far
 Their May-bush, and along the streets in flocks
 Parading with a song of taunting rhymes,
 Aimed at the laggards slumbering within doors;
 Had also heard, from those who yet remembered,
 Tales of the May-pole dance, and wreaths that
 decked

Porch, door-way, or kirk-pillar; and of youths,
 Each with his maid, before the sun was up,
 By annual custom, issuing forth in troops,
 To drink the waters of some sainted well,
 And hang it round with garlands. Love survives;
 But, for such purpose, flowers no longer grow:
 The times, too sage, perhaps too proud, have
 dropped

These lighter graces; and the rural ways
 And manners which my childhood looked upon
 Were the unluxuriant produce of a life
 Intent on little but substantial needs,
 Yet rich in beauty, beauty that was felt.
 But images of danger and distress,
 Man suffering among awful Powers and Forms;
 Of this I heard, and saw enough to make
 Imagination restless; nor was free
 Myself from frequent perils; nor were tales
 Wanting,—the tragedies of former times,
 Hazards and strange escapes, of which the rocks
 Immutable, and everdowing streams,
 Where'er I roamed, were speaking monuments.

Smooth life had flock and shepherd in old time,
 Long springs and tepid winters, on the banks
 Of delicate Galesus; and no less
 Those scattered along Adria's myrtle shores:
 Smooth life had herdsman, and his snow-white
 herd

To triumphs and to sacrificial rites
 Devoted, on the inviolable stream
 Of rich Clitumnus; and the goat-herd lived
 As calmly, underneath the pleasant brows
 Of cool Lucretilis, where the pipe was heard
 Of Pan, Invisible God, thrilling the rocks
 With tutelary music, from all harm
 The fold protecting. I myself, mature

In manhood then, have seen a pastoral tract
 Like one of these, where Fancy might run wild,
 Though under skies less generous, less serene :
 There, for her own delight had Nature framed
 A pleasure-ground, diffused a fair expanse
 Of level pasture, islanded with groves
 And banked with woody risings ; but the Plain
 Endless, here opening widely out, and there
 Shut up in lesser lakes or beds of lawn
 And intricate recesses, creek or bay
 Sheltered within a shelter, where at large
 The shepherd strays, a rolling hut his home.
 Thither he comes with spring-time, there abides
 All summer, and at sunrise ye may hear
 His flageolet to liquid notes of love
 Attuned, or sprightly life resounding far.
 Nook is there none, nor tract of that vast space
 Where passage opens, but the same shall have
 In turn its visitant, telling there his hours
 In unlaborious pleasure, with no task
 More toilsome than to carve a beechen bowl
 For spring or fountain, which the traveller finds,
 When through the region he pursues at will
 His devious course. A glimpse of such sweet life
 I saw when, from the melancholy walls
 Of Goslar, once imperial, I renewed
 My daily walk along that wide champaign,
 That, reaching to her gates, spreads east and west,
 And northwards, from beneath the mountainous
 verge

Of the Hercynian forest. Yet, hail to you
 Moors, mountains, headlands, and ye hollow vales,
 Ye long deep channels for the Atlantic's voice,
 Powers of my native region ! Ye that seize
 The heart with firmer grasp ! Your snows and
 streams

Ungovernable, and your terrifying winds,
 That howl so dismally for him who treads
 Companionless your awful solitudes !
 There, 'tis the shepherd's task the winter long
 To wait upon the storms : of their approach
 Sagacious, into sheltering coves he drives
 His flock, and thither from the homestead bears
 A toilsome burden up the craggy ways,
 And deals it out, their regular nourishment
 Strewn on the frozen snow. And when the spring
 Looks out, and all the pastures dance with lambs,
 And when the flock, with warmer weather, climbs
 Higher and higher, him his office leads
 To watch their goings, whatsoever track
 The wanderers choose. For this he quits his home
 At day-spring, and no sooner doth the sun
 Begin to strike him with a fire-like heat,
 Than he lies down upon some shining rock,

And breakfasts with his dog. When they have
 stolen,
 As is their wont, a pittance from strict time,
 For rest not needed or exchange of love,
 Then from his couch he starts ; and now his feet
 Crush out a livelier fragrance from the flowers
 Of lowly thyme, by Nature's skill enwrought
 In the wild turf : the lingering dews of morn
 Smoke round him, as from hill to hill he hies,
 His staff protending like a hunter's spear,
 Or by its aid leaping from crag to crag,
 And o'er the brawling beds of unbridged streams.
 Philosophy, methinks, at Fancy's call,
 Might deign to follow him through what he does
 Or sees in his day's march ; himself he feels,
 In those vast regions where his service lies,
 A freeman, wedded to his life of hope
 And hazard, and hard labour interchanged
 With that majestic indolence so dear
 To native man. A rambling school-boy, thus
 I felt his presence in his own domain,
 As of a lord and master, or a power,
 Or genius, under Nature, under God,
 Presiding ; and severest solitude
 Had more commanding looks when he was there.
 When up the lonely brooks on rainy days
 Angling I went, or trod the trackless hills
 By mists bewildered, suddenly mine eyes
 Have glanced upon him distant a few steps,
 In size a giant, stalking through thick fog,
 His sheep like Greenland bears ; or, as he stepped
 Beyond the boundary line of some hill-shadow,
 His form hath flashed upon me, glorified
 By the deep radiance of the setting sun :
 Or him have I descried in distant sky,
 A solitary object and sublime,
 Above all height ! like an aerial cross
 Stationed alone upon a spiry rock
 Of the Chartreuse, for worship. Thus was man
 Ennobled outwardly before my sight,
 And thus my heart was early introduced
 To an unconscious love and reverence
 Of human nature ; hence the human form
 To me became an index of delight,
 Of grace and honour, power and worthiness.
 Meanwhile this creature—spiritual almost
 As those of books, but more exalted far ;
 Far more of an imaginative form
 Than the gay Corin of the groves, who lives
 For his own fancies, or to dance by the hour,
 In coronal, with Phyllis in the midst—
 Was, for the purposes of kind, a man
 With the most common ; husband, father ; learned,
 Could teach, admonish ; suffered with the rest

From vice and folly, wretchedness and fear ;
Of this I little saw, cared less for it,
But something must have felt.

Call ye these appearances—

Which I beheld of shepherds in my youth,
This sanctity of Nature given to man—
A shadow, a delusion, ye who pore
On the dead letter, miss the spirit of things ;
Whose truth is not a motion or a shape
Instinct with vital functions, but a block
Or waxen image which yourselves have made,
And ye adore ! But blessed be the God
Of Nature and of Man that this was so ;
That men before my inexperienced eyes
Did first present themselves thus purified,
Removed, and to a distance that was fit :
And so we all of us in some degree
Are led to knowledge, wheresoever led,
And howsoever ; were it otherwise,
And we found evil fast as we find good
In our first years, or think that it is found,
How could the innocent heart bear up and live !
But doubly fortunate my lot ; not here
Alone, that something of a better life
Perhaps was round me than it is the privilege
Of most to move in, but that first I looked
At Man through objects that were great or fair ;
First communed with him by their help. And thus
Was founded a sure safeguard and defence
Against the weight of meanness, selfish cares,
Coarse manners, vulgar passions, that beat in
On all sides from the ordinary world
In which we traffic. Starting from this point
I had my face turned toward the truth, began
With an advantage furnished by that kind
Of prepossession, without which the soul
Receives no knowledge that can bring forth good,
No genuine insight ever comes to her.
From the restraint of over-watchful eyes
Preserved, I moved about, year after year,
Happy, and now most thankful that my walk
Was guarded from too early intercourse
With the deformities of crowded life,
And those ensuing laughs and contempts,
Self-pleasing, which, if we would wish to think
With a due reverence on earth's rightful lord,
Here placed to be the inheritor of heaven,
Will not permit us ; but pursue the mind,
That to devotion willingly would rise,
Into the temple and the temple's heart.

Yet deem not, Friend ! that human kind with me
Thus early took a place pre-eminent ;
Nature herself was, at this unripe time,

But secondary to my own pursuits
And animal activities, and all
Their trivial pleasures ; and when these had
drooped

And gradually expired, and Nature, prized
For her own sake, became my joy, even then—
And upwards through late youth, until not less
Than two-and-twenty summers had been told—
Was Man in my affections and regards
Subordinate to her, her visible forms
And viewless agencies : a passion, she,
A rapture often, and immediate love
Ever at hand ; he, only a delight
Occasional, an accidental grace,
His hour being not yet come. Far less had then
The inferior creatures, beast or bird, attuned
My spirit to that gentleness of love
(Though they had long been carefully observed),
Won from me those minute obeisances
Of tenderness, which I may number now
With my first blessings. Nevertheless, on these
The light of beauty did not fall in vain,
Or grandeur circumfuse them to no end.

But when that first poetic faculty
Of plain Imagination and severe,
No longer a mute influence of the soul,
Ventured, at some rash Muse's earnest call,
To try her strength among harmonious words ;
And to book-notions and the rules of art
Did knowingly conform itself ; there came
Among the simple shapes of human life
A wilfulness of fancy and conceit ;
And Nature and her objects beautified
These fictions, as in some sort, in their turn,
They burnished her. From touch of this new power
Nothing was safe : the elder-tree that grew
Beside the well-known charnel-house had then
A dismal look : the yew-tree had its ghost,
That took his station there for ornament :
The dignities of plain occurrence then
Were tasteless, and truth's golden mean, a point
Where no sufficient pleasure could be found.
Then, if a widow, staggering with the blow
Of her distress, was known to have turned her
steps
To the cold grave in which her husband slept,
One night, or haply more than one, through pain
Or half-insensate impotence of mind,
The fact was caught at greedily, and there
She must be visitant the whole year through,
Wetting the turf with never-ending tears.

Through quaint obliquities I might pursue

These cravings ; when the fox-glove, one by one,
 Upwards through every stage of the tall stem,
 Had shed beside the public way its bells,
 And stood of all dismantled, save the last
 Left at the tapering ladder's top, that seemed
 To bend as doth a slender blade of grass
 Tipped with a rain-drop, Fancy loved to seat,
 Beneath the plant despoiled, but crested still
 With this last relic, soon itself to fall,
 Some vagrant mother, whose arch little ones,
 All unconcerned by her dejected plight,
 Laughed as with rival eagerness their hands
 Gathered the purple cups that round them lay,
 Strewing the turf's green slope.

A diamond light

(Whene'er the summer sun, declining, smote
 A smooth rock wet with constant springs) was
 seen

Sparkling from out a copse-clad bank that rose
 Fronting our cottage. Oft beside the hearth
 Seated, with open door, often and long
 Upon this restless lustre have I gazed,
 That made my fancy restless as itself.
 'Twas now for me a burnished silver shield
 Suspended over a knight's tomb, who lay
 Inglorious, buried in the dusky wood :
 An entrance now into some magic cave
 Or palace built by fairies of the rock ;
 Nor could I have been bribed to disenchant
 The spectacle, by visiting the spot.
 Thus wilful Fancy, in no hurtful mood,
 Engrafted far-fetched shapes on feelings bred
 By pure Imagination : busy Power
 She was, and with her ready pupil turned
 Instinctively to human passions, then
 Least understood. Yet, 'mid the fervent swarm
 Of these vagaries, with an eye so rich
 As mine was through the bounty of a grand
 And lovely region, I had forms distinct
 To steady me : each airy thought revolved
 Round a substantial centre, which at once
 Incited it to motion, and controlled.
 I did not pine like one in cities bred,
 As was thy melancholy lot, dear Friend !
 Great Spirit as thou art, in endless dreams
 Of sickness, disjoining, joining, things
 Without the light of knowledge. Where the harm,
 If, when the woodman languished with disease
 Induced by sleeping nightly on the ground
 Within his sod-built cabin, Indian-wise,
 I called the pangs of disappointed love,
 And all the sad etcetera of the wrong,
 To help him to his grave. Meanwhile the man,
 If not already from the woods retired

To die at home, was haply as I knew,
 Withering by slow degrees, 'mid gentle airs,
 Birds, running streams, and hills so beautiful
 On golden evenings, while the charcoal pile
 Breathed up its smoke, an image of his ghost
 Or spirit that full soon must take her flight.
 Nor shall we not be tending towards that point
 Of sound humanity to which our Tale
 Leads, though by sinuous ways, if here I shew
 How Fancy, in a season when she wove
 Those slender cords, to guide the unconscious Boy
 For the Man's sake, could feed at Nature's call
 Some pensive musings which might well besem
 Maturer years.

A grove there is whose boughs

Stretch from the western marge of Thurston-mere,
 With length of shade so thick, that whoso glides
 Along the line of low-roofed water, moves
 As in a cloister. Once—while, in that shade
 Loitering, I watched the golden beams of light
 Flung from the setting sun, as they reposed
 In silent beauty on the naked ridge
 Of a high eastern hill—thus flowed my thoughts
 In a pure stream of words fresh from the heart :
 * Dear native Regions, wheresoe'er shall close
 My mortal course, there will I think on you ;
 Dying, will cast on you a backward look ;
 Even as this setting sun (albeit the Vale
 Is no where touched by one memorial gleam)
 Doth with the fond remains of his last power
 Still linger, and a farewell lustre sheds
 On the dear mountain-tops where first he rose.

Enough of humble arguments ; recal,
 My Song ! those high emotions which thy voice
 Has heretofore made known ; that bursting forth
 Of sympathy, inspiring and inspired,
 When everywhere a vital pulse was felt,
 And all the several frames of things, like stars,
 Through every magnitude distinguishable,
 Shone mutually indebted, or half lost
 Each in the other's blaze, a galaxy
 Of life and glory. In the midst stood Man,
 Outwardly, inwardly contemplated,
 As, of all visible natures, crown, though born
 Of dust, and kindred to the worm ; a Being,
 Both in perception and discernment, first
 In every capability of rapture,
 Through the divine effect of power and love ;
 As, more than anything we know, instinct
 With godhead, and, by reason and by will,
 Acknowledging dependency sublime.

Ere long, the lonely mountains left, I moved,
 Begirt, from day to day, with temporal shapes
 Of vice and folly thrust upon my view,
 Objects of sport, and ridicule, and scorn,
 Manners and characters discriminate,
 And little bustling passions that eclipse,
 As well they might, the impersonated thought,
 The idea, or abstraction of the kind.

An idler among academic bowers,
 Such was my new condition, as at large
 Has been set forth; yet here the vulgar light
 Of present, actual, superficial life,
 Gleaming through colouring of other times,
 Old usages and local privilege,
 Was welcomed, softened, if not solemnised.
 This notwithstanding, being brought more near
 To vice and guilt, forerunning wretchedness,
 Trembled,—thought, at times, of human life
 With an indefinite terror and dismay,
 Such as the storms and angry elements
 Had bred in me; but gloomier far, a dim
 Analogy to uproar and misrule,
 Disquiet, danger, and obscurity.

It might be told (but wherefore speak of things
 Common to all?) that, seeing, I was led
 Gravely to ponder—judging between good
 And evil, not as for the mind's delight
 But for her guidance—one who was to *act*,
 As sometimes to the best of feeble means
 Did, by human sympathy impelled:
 And, through dislike and most offensive pain,
 As to the truth conducted; of this faith
 Never forsaken, that, by acting well,
 And understanding, I should learn to love
 The end of life, and everything we know.

Grave Teacher, stern Preceptress! for at times
 Thou canst put on an aspect most severe;
 And on, to thee I willingly return.
 Erewhile my verse played idly with the flowers
 Entwrought upon thy mantle; satisfied
 With that amusement, and a simple look
 Of child-like inquisition now and then
 Looked upwards on thy countenance, to detect
 Some inner meanings which might harbour there.
 But how could I in mood so light indulge,
 Seeking such fresh remembrance of the day,
 When, having thriddled the long labyrinth
 Of the suburban villages, I first
 Entered thy vast dominion? On the roof
 Of an itinerant vehicle I sate,
 With vulgar men about me, trivial forms

Of houses, pavement, streets, of men and things,—
 Mean shapes on every side: but, at the instant,
 When to myself it fairly might be said,
 The threshold now is overpast, (how strange
 That aught external to the living mind
 Should have such mighty sway! yet so it was),
 A weight of ages did at once descend
 Upon my heart; no thought embodied, no
 Distinct remembrances, but weight and power,—
 Power growing under weight: alas! I feel
 That I am trifling: 'twas a moment's pause,—
 All that took place within me came and went
 As in a moment; yet with Time it dwells,
 And grateful memory, as a thing divine.

The curious traveller, who, from open day,
 Hath passed with torches into some huge cave,
 The Grotto of Antiparos, or the Den
 In old time haunted by that Danish Witch,
 Yordas; he looks around and sees the vault
 Widening on all sides; sees, or thinks he sees,
 Erelong, the massy roof above his head,
 That instantly unsettles and recedes,—
 Substance and shadow, light and darkness, all
 Commingled, making up a canopy
 Of shapes and forms and tendencies to shape
 That shift and vanish, change and interchange
 Like spectres,—ferment silent and sublime!
 That after a short space works less and less,
 Till, every effort, every motion gone,
 The scene before him stands in perfect view
 Exposed, and lifeless as a written book!—
 But let him pause awhile, and look again,
 And a new quickening shall succeed, at first
 Beginning timidly, then creeping fast,
 Till the whole cave, so late a senseless mass,
 Busies the eye with images and forms
 Boldly assembled,—here is shadowed forth
 From the projections, wrinkles, cavities,
 A variegated landscape,—there the shape
 Of some gigantic warrior clad in mail,
 The ghostly semblance of a hooded monk,
 Veiled nun, or pilgrim resting on his staff:
 Strange congregation! yet not slow to meet
 Eyes that perceive through minds that can in-
 spire.

Even in such sort had I at first been moved,
 Nor otherwise continued to be moved,
 As I explored the vast metropolis,
 Fount of my country's destiny and the world's;
 That great emporium, chronicle at once
 And burial-place of passions, and their home
 Imperial, their chief living residence.

With strong sensations teeming as it did
 Of past and present, such a place must needs
 Have pleased me, seeking knowledge at that time
 Far less than craving power ; yet knowledge came,
 Sought or unsought, and influxes of power
 Came, of themselves, or at her call derived
 In fits of kindest apprehensiveness,
 From all sides, when whate'er was in itself
 Capacious found, or seemed to find, in me
 A correspondent amplitude of mind ;
 Such is the strength and glory of our youth !
 The human nature unto which I felt
 That I belonged, and revered with love,
 Was not a punctual presence, but a spirit
 Diffused through time and space, with aid derived
 Of evidence from monuments, erect,
 Prostrate, or leaning towards their common rest
 In earth, the widely scattered wreck sublime
 Of vanished nations, or more clearly drawn
 From books and what they picture and record.

'Tis true, the history of our native land,
 With those of Greece compared and popular Rome,
 And in our high-wrought modern narratives
 Stript of their harmonising soul, the life
 Of manners and familiar incidents,
 Had never much delighted me. And less
 Than other intellects had mine been used
 To lean upon extrinsic circumstance
 Of record or tradition ; but a sense
 Of what in the Great City had been done
 And suffered, and was doing, suffering, still,
 Weighed with me, could support the test of
 thought ;

And, in despite of all that had gone by,
 Or was departing never to return,
 There I conversed with majesty and power
 Like independent natures. Hence the place
 Was thronged with impregnations like the Wilds
 In which my early feelings had been nursed—
 Bare hills and valleys, full of caverns, rocks,
 And audible seclusions, dashing lakes,
 Echoes and waterfalls, and pointed crags
 That into music touch the passing wind.
 Here then my young imagination found
 No uncongenial element ; could here
 Among new objects serve or give command,
 Even as the heart's occasions might require,

To forward reason's else too-scrupulous march.
 The effect was, still more elevated views
 Of human nature. Neither vice nor guilt,
 Debasement undergone by body or mind,
 Nor all the misery forced upon my sight,
 Misery not lightly passed, but sometimes scanned
 Most feelingly, could overthrow my trust
 In what we *may* become ; induce belief
 That I was ignorant, had been falsely taught,
 A solitary, who with vain conceits
 Had been inspired, and walked about in dreams.
 From those sad scenes when meditation turned,
 Lo ! every thing that was indeed divine
 Retained its purity inviolate,
 Nay brighter shone, by this portentous gloom
 Set off ; such opposition as aroused
 The mind of Adam, yet in Paradise
 Though fallen from bliss, when in the East he saw
 * Darkness ere day's mid course, and morning light
 More orient in the western cloud, that drew
 O'er the blue firmament a radiant white,
 Descending slow with something heavenly fraught.

Add also, that among the multitudes
 Of that huge city, oftentimes was seen
 Affectingly set forth, more than elsewhere
 Is possible, the unity of man,
 One spirit over ignorance and vice
 Predominant, in good and evil hearts ;
 One sense for moral judgments, as one eye
 For the sun's light. The soul when smitten thus
 By a sublime *idea*, whencesoe'er
 Vouchsafed for union or communion, feeds
 On the pure bliss, and takes her rest with God.

Thus from a very early age, O Friend !
 My thoughts by slow gradations had been drawn
 To human-kind, and to the good and ill
 Of human life : Nature had led me on ;
 And oft amid the "busy hum" I seemed
 To travel independent of her help,
 As if I had forgotten her ; but no,
 The world of human-kind outweighed not hers
 In my habitual thoughts ; the scale of love,
 Though filling daily, still was light, compared
 With that in which *her* mighty objects lay.

* From Milton, *Par. Lost*, xi. 204.—*Ed.*

BOOK NINTH.

RESIDENCE IN FRANCE.

EVEN as a river,—partly (it might seem)
Yielding to old remembrances, and swayed
In part by fear to shape a way direct,
That would engulf him soon in the ravenous sea—
Turns, and will measure back his course, far back,
Seeking the very regions which he crossed
In his first outset; so have we, my Friend!
Turned and returned with intricate delay.
Or as a traveller, who has gained the brow
Of some aerial Down, while there he halts
For breathing-time, is tempted to review
The region left behind him; and, if aught
Deserving notice have escaped regard,
Or been regarded with too careless eye,
Strives, from that height, with one and yet one
more

Last look, to make the best amends he may:
So have we lingered. Now we start afresh
With courage, and new hope risen on our toil.
Fair greetings to this shapeless eagerness,
Whene'er it comes! needful in work so long,
Thrice needful to the argument which now
Awaits us! Oh, how much unlike the past!

Free as a colt at pasture on the hill,
I ranged at large, through London's wide domain,
Month after month. Obscurely did I live,
Not seeking frequent intercourse with men,
By literature, or elegance, or rank,
Distinguished. Scarcely was a year thus spent
Ere I forsook the crowded solitude,
With less regret for its luxurious pomp,
And all the nicely-guarded shows of art,
Than for the humble book-stalls in the streets,
Exposed to eye and hand where'er I turned.

France lured me forth; the realm that I had
crossed
So lately, journeying toward the snow-clad Alps.
But now, relinquishing the scrip and staff,
And all enjoyment which the summer sun
Sheds round the steps of those who meet the day
With motion constant as his own, I went
Prepared to sojourn in a pleasant town,
Washed by the current of the stately Loire.

Through Paris lay my readiest course, and there
Sojourning a few days, I visited
In haste, each spot of old or recent fame,
The latter chiefly; from the field of Mars
Down to the suburbs of St. Antony,
And from Mont Martyr southward to the Dome
Of Geneviève. In both her clamorous Halls,
The National Synod and the Jacobins,
I saw the Revolutionary Power
Toss like a ship at anchor, rocked by storms;
The Arcades I traversed, in the Palace huge
Of Orleans; coasted round and round the line
Of Tavern, Brothel, Gaming-house, and Shop,
Great rendezvous of worst and best, the walk
Of all who had a purpose, or had not;
I stared and listened, with a stranger's ears,
To Hawkers and Haranguers, hubbub wild!
And hissing Factionists with ardent eyes,
In knots, or pairs, or single. Not a look
Hope takes, or Doubt or Fear is forced to wear,
But seemed there present; and I scanned them all,
Watched every gesture uncontrollable,
Of anger, and vexation, and despite,
All side by side, and struggling face to face,
With gaiety and dissolute idleness.

Where silent zephyrs sported with the dust
Of the Bastille, I sate in the open sun,
And from the rubbish gathered up a stone,
And pocketed the relic, in the guise
Of an enthusiast; yet, in honest truth,
I looked for something that I could not find,
Affecting more emotion than I felt;
For 'tis most certain, that these various sights,
However potent their first shock, with me
Appeared to recompense the traveller's pains
Less than the painted Magdalene of Le Brun,
A beauty exquisitely wrought, with hair
Dishevelled, gleaming eyes, and rueful cheek
Pale and bedropped with overflowing tears.

But hence to my more permanent abode
I hasten; there, by novelties in speech,
Domestic manners, customs, gestures, looks,
And all the attire of ordinary life,
Attention was engrossed; and, thus amused,
I stood 'mid those concussions, unconcerned,
Tranquil almost, and careless as a flower

Glassed in a green-house, or a parlour shrub
 That spreads its leaves in unmolested peace,
 While every bush and tree, the country through,
 Is shaking to the roots : indifference this
 Which may seem strange : but I was unprepared
 With needful knowledge, had abruptly passed
 Into a theatre, whose stage was filled
 And busy with an action far advanced.
 Like others, I had skimmed, and sometimes read
 With care, the master pamphlets of the day ;
 Nor wanted such half-insight as grew wild
 Upon that meagre soil, helped out by talk
 And public news ; but having never seen
 A chronicle that might suffice to show
 Whence the main organs of the public power
 Had sprung, their transmigrations, when and how
 Accomplished, giving thus unto events
 A form and body ; all things were to me
 Loose and disjointed, and the affections left
 Without a vital interest. At that time,
 Moreover, the first storm was overblown,
 And the strong hand of outward violence
 Locked up in quiet. For myself, I fear
 Now in connection with so great a theme
 To speak (as I must be compelled to do)
 Of one so unimportant ; night by night
 Did I frequent the formal haunts of men,
 Whom, in the city, privilege of birth
 Sequestered from the rest, societies
 Polished in arts, and in punctilio versed ;
 Whence, and from deeper causes, all discourse
 Of good and evil of the time was shunned
 With scrupulous care ; but these restrictions soon
 Proved tedious, and I gradually withdrew
 Into a noisier world, and thus ere long
 Became a patriot ; and my heart was all
 Given to the people, and my love was theirs.

A band of military Officers,
 Then stationed in the city, were the chief
 Of my associates : some of these wore swords
 That had been seasoned in the wars, and all
 Were men well-born ; the chivalry of France.
 In age and temper differing, they had yet
 One spirit ruling in each heart ; alike
 (Save only one, hereafter to be named)
 Were bent upon undoing what was done :
 This was their rest and only hope ; therewith
 No fear had they of bad becoming worse,
 For worst to them was come ; nor would have
 stirred,
 Or deemed it worth a moment's thought to stir,
 In any thing, save only as the act
 Looked thitherward. One, reckoning by years,

Was in the prime of manhood, and erewhile
 He had sate lord in many tender hearts ;
 Though heedless of such honours now, and
 changed :

His temper was quite mastered by the times,
 And they had blighted him, had eaten away
 The beauty of his person, doing wrong
 Alike to body and to mind : his port,
 Which once had been erect and open, now
 Was stooping and contracted, and a face,
 Endowed by Nature with her fairest gifts
 Of symmetry and light and bloom, expressed,
 As much as any that was ever seen,
 A ravage out of season, made by thoughts
 Unhealthy and vexatious. With the hour,
 That from the press of Paris duly brought
 Its freight of public news, the fever came,
 A punctual visitant, to shake this man,
 Disarmed his voice and fanned his yellow cheek
 Into a thousand colours ; while he read,
 Or mused, his sword was haunted by his touch
 Continually, like an uneasy place
 In his own body. 'Twas in truth an hour
 Of universal ferment ; mildest men
 Were agitated ; and commotions, strife
 Of passion and opinion, filled the walls
 Of peaceful houses with unquiet sounds.
 The soil of common life, was, at that time,
 Too hot to tread upon. Oft said I then,
 And not then only, " What a mockery this
 Of history, the past and that to come !
 Now do I feel how all men are deceived,
 Reading of nations and their works, in faith,
 Faith given to vanity and emptiness ;
 Oh ! laughter for the page that would reflect
 To future times the face of what now is !"
 The land all swarmed with passion, like a plain
 Devoured by locusts,—Carra, Gorsas,—add
 A hundred other names, forgotten now,
 Nor to be heard of more ; yet, they were powers,
 Like earthquakes, shocks repeated day by day,
 And felt through every nook of town and field.

Such was the state of things. Meanwhile the chief
 Of my associates stood prepared for flight
 To augment the band of emigrants in arms
 Upon the borders of the Rhine, and leagued
 With foreign foes mustered for instant war.
 This was their undisguised intent, and they
 Were waiting with the whole of their desires
 The moment to depart.

An Englishman,
 Born in a land whose very name appeared
 To license some unruliness of mind ;

A stranger, with youth's further privilege,
And the indulgence that a half-learn't speech
Wins from the courteous ; I, who had been else
Shunned and not tolerated, freely lived
With these defenders of the Crown, and talked,
And heard their notions ; nor did they disdain
The wish to bring me over to their cause.

But though untaught by thinking or by books
To reason well of polity or law,
And nice distinctions, then on every tongue,
Of natural rights and civil ; and to acts
Of nations and their passing interests,
(If with unworldly ends and aims compared)
Almost indifferent, even the historian's tale
Prizing but little otherwise than I prized
Tales of the poets, as it made the heart
Beat high, and filled the fancy with fair forms,
Old heroes and their sufferings and their deeds ;
Yet in the regal sceptre, and the pomp
Of orders and degrees, I nothing found
Then, or had ever, even in crudest youth,
That dazzled me, but rather what I mourned
And ill could brook, beholding that the best
Ruled not, and feeling that they ought to rule.

For, born in a poor district, and which yet
Retaineth more of ancient homeliness,
Than any other nook of English ground,
It was my fortune scarcely to have seen,
Through the whole tenor of my school-day time,
The face of one, who, whether boy or man,
Was vested with attention or respect
Through claims of wealth or blood ; nor was it
least

Of many benefits, in later years
Derived from academic institutes
And rules, that they held something up to view
Of a Republic, where all stood thus far
Upon equal ground ; that we were brothers all
In honour, as in one community,
Scholars and gentlemen ; where, furthermore,
Distinction open lay to all that came,
And wealth and titles were in less esteem
Than talents, worth, and prosperous industry.
Add unto this, subservience from the first
To presences of God's mysterious power
Made manifest in Nature's sovereignty,
And fellowship with venerable books,
To sanction the proud workings of the soul,
And mountain liberty. It could not be
But that one tutored thus should look with awe
Upon the faculties of man, receive
Gladly the highest promises, and hail,

As best, the government of equal rights
And individual worth. And hence, O Friend !
If at the first great outbreak I rejoiced
Less than might well befit my youth, the cause
In part lay here, that unto me the events
Seemed nothing out of nature's certain course,
A gift that was come rather late than soon.
No wonder, then, if advocates like these,
Inflamed by passion, blind with prejudice,
And stung with injury, at this riper day,
Were impotent to make my hopes put on
The shape of theirs, my understanding bend
In honour to their honour : zeal, which yet
Had slumbered, now in opposition burst
Forth like a Polar summer : every word
They uttered was a dart, by counter-winds
Blown back upon themselves ; their reason seemed
Confusion-stricken by a higher power
Than human understanding, their discourse
Maimed, spiritless ; and, in their weakness strong,
I triumphed.

Meantime, day by day, the roads
Were crowded with the bravest youth of France,
And all the promptest of her spirits, linked
In gallant soldiership, and posting on
To meet the war upon her frontier bounds.
Yet at this very moment do tears start
Into mine eyes : I do not say I weep—
I wept not then,—but tears have dimmed my sight,
In memory of the farewells of that time,
Domestic severings, female fortitude
At dearest separation, patriot love
And self-devotion, and terrestrial hope,
Encouraged with a martyr's confidence ;
Even files of strangers merely seen but once,
And for a moment, men from far with sound
Of music, martial tunes, and banners spread,
Entering the city, here and there a face,
Or person singled out among the rest,
Yet still a stranger and beloved as such ;
Even by these passing spectacles my heart
Was oftentimes uplifted, and they seemed
Arguments sent from Heaven to prove the cause
Good, pure, which no one could stand up against,
Who was not lost, abandoned, selfish, proud,
Mean, miserable, wilfully depraved,
Hater perverse of equity and truth.

Among that band of Officers was one,
Already hinted at, of other mould—
A patriot, thence rejected by the rest,
And with an oriental loathing spurned,
As of a different caste. A meeker man
Than this lived never, nor a more benign,

Meek though enthusiastic. Injuries
Made *him* more gracious, and his nature then
Did breathe its sweetness out most sensibly,
As aromatic flowers on Alpine turf,
When foot hath crushed them. He through the
events

Of that great change wandered in perfect faith,
As through a book, an old romance, or tale
Of Fairy, or some dream of actions wrought
Behind the summer clouds. By birth he ranked
With the most noble, but unto the poor
Among mankind he was in service bound,
As by some tie invisible, oaths professed
To a religious order. Man he loved
As man; and, to the mean and the obscure,
And all the homely in their homely works,
Transferred a courtesy which had no air
Of condescension; but did rather seem
A passion and a gallantry, like that
Which he, a soldier, in his idler day
Had paid to woman: somewhat vain he was,
Or seemed so, yet it was not vanity,
But fondness, and a kind of radiant joy
Diffused around him, while he was intent
On works of love or freedom, or revolved
Complacently the progress of a cause,
Whereof he was a part: yet this was meek
And placid, and took nothing from the man
That was delightful. Oft in solitude
With him did I discourse about the end
Of civil government, and its wisest forms;
Of ancient loyalty, and chartered rights,
Custom and habit, novelty and change;
Of self-respect, and virtue in the few
For patrimonial honour set apart,
And ignorance in the labouring multitude.
For he, to all intolerance indisposed,
Balanced these contemplations in his mind;
And I, who at that time was scarcely dipped
Into the turmoil, bore a sounder judgment
Than later days allowed; carried about me,
With less alloy to its integrity,
The experience of past ages, as, through help
Of books and common life, it makes sure way
To youthful minds, by objects over near
Not pressed upon, nor dazzled or misled
By struggling with the crowd for present ends.

But though not deaf, nor obstinate to find
Error without excuse upon the side
Of them who strove against us, more delight
We took, and let this freely be confessed,
In painting to ourselves the miseries
Of royal courts, and that voluptuous life

Unfeeling, where the man who is of soul
The meanest thrives the most; where dignity,
True personal dignity, abideth not;
A light, a cruel, and vain world cut off
From the natural inlets of just sentiment,
From lowly sympathy and chastening truth;
Where good and evil interchange their names,
And thirst for bloody spoils abroad is paired
With vice at home. We added dearest themes—
Man and his noble nature, as it is
The gift which God has placed within his power,
His blind desires and steady faculties
Capable of clear truth, the one to break
Bondage, the other to build liberty
On firm foundations, making social life,
Through knowledge spreading and imperishable,
As just in regulation, and as pure
As individual in the wise and good.

We summoned up the honourable deeds
Of ancient Story, thought of each bright spot,
That would be found in all recorded time,
Of truth preserved and error passed away:
Of single spirits that catch the flame from Heaven,
And how the multitudes of men will feed
And fan each other; thought of sects, how keen
They are to put the appropriate nature on,
Triumphant over every obstacle
Of custom, language, country, love, or hate,
And what they do and suffer for their creed;
How far they travel, and how long endure;
How quickly mighty Nations have been formed,
From least beginnings; how, together locked
By new opinions, scattered tribes have made
One body, spreading wide as clouds in heaven.
To aspirations then of our own minds
Did we appeal; and, finally, beheld
A living confirmation of the whole
Before us, in a people from the depth
Of shameful imbecility uprisen,
Fresh as the morning star. Elate we looked
Upon their virtues; saw, in rudest men,
Self-sacrifice the firmest; generous love,
And continence of mind, and sense of right,
Uppermost in the midst of fiercest strife.

Oh, sweet it is, in academic groves,
Or such retirement, Friend! as we have known
In the green dales beside our Rotha's stream,
Greta, or Derwent, or some nameless rill,
To ruminate, with interchange of talk,
On rational liberty, and hope in man,
Justice and peace. But far more sweet such toil—
Toil, say I, for it leads to thoughts abstruse—

If nature then be standing on the brink
Of some great trial, and we hear the voice
Of one devoted,—one whom circumstance
Hath called upon to embody his deep sense
In action, give it outwardly a shape,
And that of benediction, to the world.
Then doubt is not, and truth is more than
truth,—

A hope it is, and a desire; a creed
Of zeal, by an authority Divine
Sanctioned, of danger, difficulty, or death.
Such conversation, under Attic shades,
Did Dion hold with Plato; ripened thus
For a Deliverer's glorious task,—and such
He, on that ministry already bound,
Fled with Eudemus and Timonides,
Surrounded by adventurers in arms,
When those two vessels with their daring freight,
For the Sicilian Tyrant's overthrow,
Sailed from Zacynthus,—philosophic war,
Led by Philosophers. With harder fate,
Though like ambition, such was he, O Friend!
Of whom I speak. So Beaupuis (let the name
Stand near the worthiest of Antiquity)
Fashioned his life; and many a long discourse,
With like persuasion honoured, we maintained:
He, on his part, accoutred for the worst,
He perished fighting, in supreme command,
Upon the borders of the unhappy Loire,
For liberty, against deluded men,
His fellow country-men; and yet most blessed
In this, that he the fate of later times
Lived not to see, nor what we now behold,
Who have as ardent hearts as he had then.

Along that very Loire, with festal mirth
Resounding at all hours, and innocent yet
Of civil slaughter, was our frequent walk;
Or in wide forests of continuous shade,
Solemn and over-arched, with open space
Beneath the trees, clear footing many a mile—
A solemn region. Oft amid those haunts,
From earnest dialogues I slipped in thought,
And let remembrance steal to other times,
When, o'er those interwoven roots, moss-clad,
And smooth as marble or a waveless sea,
Some Hermit, from his cell forth-strayed, might
Pace
A sylvan meditation undisturbed;
Or on the pavement of a Gothic church
Talks a lone Monk, when service hath expired,
In peace and silence. But if e'er was heard,—
Heard, though unseen,—a devious traveller,
Retiring or approaching from afar

With speed and echoes loud of trampling hoofs
From the hard floor reverberated, then
It was Angelica thundering through the woods
Upon her palfrey, or that gentle maid
Erminia, fugitive as fair as she.
Sometimes methought I saw a pair of knights
Joust underneath the trees, that as in storm
Rocked high above their heads; anon, the din
Of boisterous merriment, and music's roar,
In sudden proclamation, burst from haunt
Of Satyrs in some viewless glade, with dance
Rejoicing o'er a female in the midst,
A mortal beauty, their unhappy thrall.
The width of those huge forests, unto me
A novel scene, did often in this way
Master my fancy while I wandered on
With that revered companion. And sometimes—
When to a convent in a meadow green,
By a brook-side, we came, a roofless pile,
And not by reverential touch of Time
Dismantled, but by violence abrupt—
In spite of those heart-bracing colloquies,
In spite of real fervour, and of that
Less genuine and wrought up within myself—
I could not but bewail a wrong so harsh,
And for the Matin-bell to sound no more
Grieved, and the twilight taper, and the cross
High on the topmost pinnacle, a sign
(How welcome to the weary traveller's eyes!)
Of hospitality and peaceful rest.
And when the partner of those varied walks
Pointed upon occasion to the site
Of Romorentin, home of ancient kings,
To the imperial edifice of Blois,
Or to that rural castle, name now slipped
From my remembrance, where a lady lodged,
By the first Francis wooed, and bound to him
In chains of mutual passion, from the tower,
As a tradition of the country tells,
Practised to commune with her royal knight
By cressets and love-beacons, intercourse
'Twixt her high-seated residence and his
Far off at Chambord on the plain beneath;
Even here, though less than with the peaceful
house
Religious, 'mid those frequent monuments
Of Kings, their vices and their better deeds,
Imagination, potent to inflame
At times with virtuous wrath and noble scorn,
Did also often mitigate the force
Of civic prejudice, the bigotry,
So call it, of a youthful patriot's mind;
And on these spots with many gleams I looked
Of chivalrous delight. Yet not the less,

Hatred of absolute rule, where will of one
 Is law for all, and of that barren pride
 In them who, by immunities unjust,
 Between the sovereign and the people stand,
 His helper and not theirs, laid stronger hold
 Daily upon me, mixed with pity too
 And love; for where hope is, there love will be
 For the abject multitude. And when we chanced
 One day to meet a hunger-bitten girl,
 Who crept along fitting her languid gait
 Unto a heifer's motion, by a cord
 Tied to her arm, and picking thus from the lane
 Its sustenance, while the girl with pallid hands
 Was busy knitting in a heartless mood
 Of solitude, and at the sight my friend
 In agitation said, " 'Tis against *that*
 That we are fighting," I with him believed
 That a benignant spirit was abroad
 Which might not be withstood, that poverty
 Abject as this would in a little time
 Be found no more, that we should see the earth
 Unthwarted in her wish to recompense
 The meek, the lowly, patient child of toil,
 All institutes for ever blotted out
 That legalised exclusion, empty pomp
 Abolished, sensual state and cruel power,
 Whether by edict of the one or few;
 And finally, as sum and crown of all,
 Should see the people having a strong hand
 In framing their own laws; whence better days
 To all mankind. But, these things set apart,
 Was not this single confidence enough
 To animate the mind that ever turned
 A thought to human welfare? That henceforth
 Captivity by mandate without law
 Should cease; and open accusation lead
 To sentence in the hearing of the world,
 And open punishment, if not the air
 Be free to breathe in, and the heart of man
 Dread nothing. From this height I shall not
 stoop
 To humbler matter that detained us oft
 In thought or conversation, public acts,
 And public persons, and emotions wrought
 Within the breast, as ever-varying winds
 Of record or report swept over us;

But I might here, instead, repeat a tale,*
 Told by my Patriot friend, of sad events,
 That prove to what low depth had struck the roots
 How widely spread the boughs, of that old tree
 Which, as a deadly mischief, and a foul
 And black dishonour, France was weary of.

Oh, happy time of youthful lovers, (thus
 The story might begin,) oh, balmy time,
 In which a love-knot, on a lady's brow,
 Is fairer than the fairest star in Heaven!
 So might—and with that prelude *did* begin
 The record; and, in faithful verse, was given
 The doleful sequel.

But our little bark
 On a strong river boldly hath been launched;
 And from the driving current should we turn
 To loiter wilfully within a creek,
 Howe'er attractive, Fellow voyager!
 Would'st thou not chide? Yet deem not my
 pains lost:

For Vaudracour and Julia (so were named
 The ill-fated pair) in that plain tale will draw
 Tears from the hearts of others, when their own
 Shall beat no more. Thou, also, there may'st read
 At leisure, how the enamoured youth was driven,
 By public power abased, to fatal crime,
 Nature's rebellion against monstrous law;
 How, between heart and heart, oppression thrus
 Her mandates, severing whom true love had
 joined,

Harassing both; until he sank and pressed
 The couch his fate had made for him; supine,
 Save when the stings of viperous remorse,
 Trying their strength, enforced him to start up,
 Aghast and prayerless. Into a deep wood
 He fled, to shun the haunts of human kind;
 There dwelt, weakened in spirit more and more
 Nor could the voice of Freedom, which through

France
 Full speedily resounded, public hope,
 Or personal memory of his own worst wrongs,
 Rouse him; but, hidden in those gloomy shades
 His days he wasted,—an imbecile mind.

* See "Vaudracour and Julia," p. 88.—Ed

BOOK TENTH.

RESIDENCE IN FRANCE.

CONTINUED.

It was a beautiful and silent day
That overspread the countenance of earth,
Then fading with unusual quietness,—
A day as beautiful as e'er was given
To soothe regret, though deepening what it
soothed,

When by the gliding Loire I paused, and cast
Upon his rich domains, vineyard and tilth,
Green meadow-ground, and many-coloured woods,
Again, and yet again, a farewell look ;
Then from the quiet of that scene passed on,
Bound to the fierce Metropolis. From his throne
The King had fallen, and that invading host—
Presumptuous cloud, on whose black front was
written

The tender mercies of the dismal wind
That bore it—on the plains of Liberty
Had burst innocuous. Say in bolder words,
They—who had come elate as eastern hunters
Banded beneath the Great Mogul, when he
Erewhile went forth from Agra or Lahore,
Rajahs and Omrahs in his train, intent
To drive their prey enclosed within a ring
Wide as a province, but, the signal given,
Before the point of the life-threatening spear
Narrowing itself by moments—they, rash men,
Had seen the anticipated quarry turned
Into avengers, from whose wrath they fled
In terror. Disappointment and dismay
Remained for all whose fancies had run wild
With evil expectations ; confidence
And perfect triumph for the better cause.

The State, as if to stamp the final seal
On her security, and to the world
Show what she was, a high and fearless soul,
Exulting in defiance, or heart-stung
By sharp resentment, or belike to taunt
With spiteful gratitude the baffled League,
That had stirred up her slackening faculties
To a new transition, when the King was crushed,
Spared not the empty throne, and in proud haste
Assumed the body and venerable name
Of a Republic. Lamentable crimes,
'Tis true, had gone before this hour, dire work

Of massacre, in which the senseless sword
Was prayed to as a judge ; but these were past,
Earth free from them for ever, as was thought,—
Ephemeral monsters, to be seen but once !
Things that could only show themselves and die.

Cheered with this hope, to Paris I returned,
And ranged, with ardour heretofore unfelt,
The spacious city, and in progress passed
The prison where the unhappy Monarch lay,
Associate with his children and his wife
In bondage ; and the palace, lately stormed
With roar of cannon by a furious host.
I crossed the square (an empty area then !)
Of the Carrousel, where so late had lain
The dead, upon the dying heaped, and gazed
On this and other spots, as doth a man
Upon a volume whose contents he knows
Are memorable, but from him locked up,
Being written in a tongue he cannot read,
So that he questions the mute leaves with pain,
And half upbraids their silence. But that night
I felt most deeply in what world I was,
What ground I trod on, and what air I breathed.
High was my room and lonely, near the roof
Of a large mansion or hotel, a lodge
That would have pleased me in more quiet times ;
Nor was it wholly without pleasure then.
With unextinguished taper I kept watch,
Reading at intervals ; the fear gone by
Pressed on me almost like a fear to come.
I thought of those September massacres,
Divided from me by one little month,
Saw them and touched : the rest was conjured up
From tragic fictions or true history,
Remembrances and dim admonishments.
The horse is taught his manage, and no star
Of wildest course but treads back his own steps ;
For the spent hurricane the air provides
As fierce a successor ; the tide retreats
But to return out of its hiding-place
In the great deep ; all things have second birth ;
The earthquake is not satisfied at once ;
And in this way I wrought upon myself,
Until I seemed to hear a voice that cried,
To the whole city, "Sleep no more." The trance
Fled with the voice to which it had given birth ;
But vainly comments of a calmer mind

Promised soft peace and sweet forgetfulness.
The place, all hushed and silent as it was,
Appeared unfit for the repose of night,
Defenceless as a wood where tigers roam.

With early morning towards the Palace-walk
Of Orleans eagerly I turned; as yet
The streets were still; not so those long Arcades;
There, 'mid a peal of ill-matched sounds and cries,
That greeted me on entering, I could hear
Shrill voices from the hawkers in the throng,
Bawling, "Denunciation of the Crimes
Of Maximilian Robespierre;" the hand,
Prompt as the voice, held forth a printed speech,
The same that had been recently pronounced,
When Robespierre, not ignorant for what mark
Some words of indirect reproof had been
Intended, rose in hardihood, and dared
The man who had an ill surmise of him
To bring his charge in openness; whereat,
When a dead pause ensued, and no one stirred,
In silence of all present, from his seat
Louvét walked single through the avenue,
And took his station in the Tribune, saying,
"I, Robespierre, accuse thee!" Well is known
The inglorious issue of that charge, and how
He, who had launched the startling thunderbolt,
The one bold man, whose voice the attack had
sounded,

Was left without a follower to discharge
His perilous duty, and retire lamenting
That Heaven's best aid is wasted upon men
Who to themselves are false.

But these are things

Of which I speak, only as they were storm
Or sunshine to my individual mind,
No further. Let me then relate that now—
In some sort seeing with my proper eyes
That Liberty, and Life, and Death would soon
To the remotest corners of the land
Lie in the arbitrement of those who ruled
The capital City; what was struggled for,
And by what combatants victory must be won;
The indecision on their part whose aim
Seemed best, and the straightforward path of those
Who in attack or in defence were strong
Through their impiety—my inmost soul
Was agitated; yea, I could almost
Have prayed that throughout earth upon all men,
By patient exercise of reason made
Worthy of liberty, all spirits filled
With zeal expanding in Truth's holy light,
The gift of tongues might fall, and power arrive
From the four quarters of the winds to do

For France, what without help she could not do,
A work of honour; think not that to this
I added, work of safety: from all doubt
Or trepidation for the end of things
Far was I, far as angels are from guilt.

Yet did I grieve, nor only grieved, but thought
Of opposition and of remedies:
An insignificant stranger and obscure,
And one, moreover, little graced with power
Of eloquence even in my native speech,
And all unfit for tumult or intrigue,
Yet would I at this time with willing heart
Have undertaken for a cause so great
Service however dangerous. I revolved,
How much the destiny of Man had still
Hung upon single persons; that there was,
Transcendent to all local patrimony,
One nature, as there is one sun in heaven;
That objects, even as they are great, thereby
Do come within the reach of humblest eyes;
That Man is only weak through his mistrust
And want of hope where evidence divine
Proclaims to him that hope should be most sure;
Nor did the inexperience of my youth
Preclude conviction, that a spirit strong
In hope, and trained to noble aspirations,
A spirit thoroughly faithful to itself,
Is for Society's unreasoning herd
A domineering instinct, serves at once
For way and guide, a fluent receptacle
That gathers up each petty straggling rill
And vein of water, glad to be rolled on
In safe obedience; that a mind, whose rest
Is where it ought to be, in self-restraint,
In circumspection and simplicity,
Falls rarely in entire discomfiture
Below its aim, or meets with, from without,
A treachery that foils it or defeats;
And, lastly, if the means on human will,
Frail human will, dependent should betray
Him who too boldly trusted them, I felt
That 'mid the loud distractions of the world
A sovereign voice subsists within the soul,
Arbiter undisturbed of right and wrong,
Of life and death, in majesty severe
Enjoining, as may best promote the aims
Of truth and justice, either sacrifice,
From whatsoever region of our cares
Or our infirm affections Nature pleads,
Earnest and blind, against the stern decree.

On the other side, I called to mind those truths
That are the common-places of the schools—

(A theme for boys, too hackneyed for their sires,) Yet, with a revelation's liveliness,
In all their comprehensive bearings known
And visible to philosophers of old,
Men who, to business of the world untrained,
Lived in the shade; and to Harmodius known
And his compeer Aristogiton, known
To Brutus—that tyrannic power is weak,
Hath neither gratitude, nor faith, nor love,
Nor the support of good or evil men
To trust in; that the godhead which is ours
Can never utterly be charmed or stilled;
That nothing hath a natural right to last
But equity and reason; that all else
Meets foes irreconcilable, and at best
Lives only by variety of disease.

Well might my wishes be intense, my thoughts
Strong and perturbed, not doubting at that time
But that the virtue of one paramount mind
Would have abashed those impious crests—have
quelled

Outrage and bloody power, and—in despite
Of what the People long had been and were
Through ignorance and false teaching, sadder
proof

Of immaturity, and—in the teeth
Of desperate opposition from without—
Have cleared a passage for just government,
And left a solid birthright to the State,
Redeemed, according to example given
By ancient lawgivers.

In this frame of mind,
Dragged by a chain of harsh necessity,
So seemed it,—now I thankfully acknowledge,
Forced by the gracious providence of Heaven,—
To England I returned, else (though assured
That I both was and must be of small weight,
No better than a landsman on the deck
Of a ship struggling with a hideous storm)
Doubtless, I should have then made common cause
With some who perished; haply perished too,
A poor mistaken and bewildered offering,—
Should to the breast of Nature have gone back,
With all my resolutions, all my hopes,
A Poet only to myself, to men
Useless, and even, beloved Friend! a soul
To thee unknown!

Twice had the trees let fall
Their leaves, as often Winter had put on
His hoary crown, since I had seen the surge
Beat against Albion's shore, since ear of mine
Had caught the accents of my native speech
Upon our native country's sacred ground.

A patriot of the world, how could I glide
Into communion with her sylvan shades,
Erewhile my tuneful haunt? It pleased me more
To abide in the great City, where I found
The general air still busy with the stir
Of that first memorable onset made
By a strong levy of humanity
Upon the traffickers in Negro blood;
Effort which, though defeated, had recalled
To notice old forgotten principles,
And through the nation spread a novel heat
Of virtuous feeling. For myself, I own
That this particular strife had wanted power
To rivet my affections; nor did now
Its unsuccessful issue much excite
My sorrow; for I brought with me the faith
That, if France prospered, good men would not
long

Pay fruitless worship to humanity,
And this most rotten branch of human shame,
Object, so seemed it, of superfluous pains,
Would fall together with its parent tree.
What, then, were my emotions, when in arms
Britain put forth her free-born strength in league,
Oh, pity and shame! with those confederate
Powers!

Not in my single self alone I found,
But in the minds of all ingenuous youth,
Change and subversion from that hour. No shock
Given to my moral nature had I known
Down to that very moment; neither lapse
Nor turn of sentiment that might be named
A revolution, save at this one time;
All else was progress on the self-same path
On which, with a diversity of pace,
I had been travelling: this a stride at once
Into another region. As a light
And pliant harebell, swinging in the breeze
On some grey rock—its birth-place—so had I
Wanted, fast rooted on the ancient tower
Of my beloved country, wishing not
A happier fortune than to wither there:
Now was I from that pleasant station torn
And tossed about in whirlwind. I rejoiced,
Yea, afterwards—truth most painful to record!—
Exulted, in the triumph of my soul,
When Englishmen by thousands were o'erthrown,
Left without glory on the field, or driven,
Brave hearts! to shameful flight. It was a grief,—
Grief call it not, 'twas anything but that,—
A conflict of sensations without name,
Of which *he* only, who may love the sight
Of a village steeple, as I do, can judge,
When, in the congregation bending all

To their great Father, prayers were offered up,
Or praises for our country's victories ;
And, 'mid the simple worshippers, perchance
I only, like an uninvited guest
Whom no one owned, sate silent, shall I add,
Fed on the day of vengeance yet to come.

Oh ! much have they to account for, who could
tear,

By violence, at one decisive rent,
From the best youth in England their dear pride,
Their joy, in England ; this, too, at a time
In which worst losses easily might wean
The best of names, when patriotic love
Did of itself in modesty give way,
Like the Precursor when the Deity
Is come Whose harbinger he was ; a time
In which apostasy from ancient faith
Seemed but conversion to a higher creed ;
Withal a season dangerous and wild,
A time when sage Experience would have snatched
Flowers out of any hedge-row to compose
A chaplet in contempt of his grey locks.

When the proud fleet that bears the red-cross
flag

In that unworthy service was prepared
To mingle, I beheld the vessels lie,
A brood of gallant creatures, on the deep ;
I saw them in their rest, a sojourner
Through a whole month of calm and glassy days
In that delightful island which protects
Their place of convocation—there I heard,
Each evening, pacing by the still sea-shore,
A monitory sound that never failed,—
The sunset cannon. While the orb went down
In the tranquillity of nature, came
That voice, ill requiem ! seldom heard by me
Without a spirit overcast by dark
Imaginations, sense of woes to come,
Sorrow for human kind, and pain of heart.

In France, the men, who, for their desperate
ends,

Had plucked up mercy by the roots, were glad
Of this new enemy. Tyrants, strong before
In wicked pleas, were strong as demons now ;
And thus, on every side beset with foes,
The goaded land waxed mad ; the crimes of few
Spread into madness of the many ; blasts
From hell came sanctified like airs from heaven.
The sternness of the just, the faith of those
Who doubted not that Providence had times
Of vengeful retribution, theirs who throned

The human Understanding paramount
And made of that their God, the hopes of men
Who were content to barter short-lived pangs
For a paradise of ages, the blind rage
Of insolent tempers, the light vanity
Of intermeddlers, steady purposes
Of the suspicious, slips of the indiscreet,
And all the accidents of life were pressed
Into one service, busy with one work.
The Senate stood aghast, her prudence quenched,
Her wisdom stifled, and her justice scared,
Her frenzy only active to extol
Past outrages, and shape the way for new,
Which no one dared to oppose or mitigate.

Domestic carnage now filled the whole year
With feast-days ; old men from the chimney-nook,
The maiden from the bosom of her love,
The mother from the cradle of her babe,
The warrior from the field—all perished, all—
Friends, enemies, of all parties, ages, ranks,
Head after head, and never heads enough
For those that bade them fall. They found their
joy,

They made it proudly, eager as a child,
(If like desires of innocent little ones
May with such heinous appetites be compared),
Pleased in some open field to exercise
A toy that mimics with revolving wings
The motion of a wind-mill ; though the air
Do of itself blow fresh, and make the vanes
Spin in his eyesight, *that* contents him not,
But, with the plaything at arm's length, he sets
His front against the blast, and runs amain,
That it may whirl the faster.

Amid the depth

Of those enormities, even thinking minds
Forgot, at seasons, whence they had their being ;
Forgot, that such a sound was ever heard
As Liberty upon earth : yet all beneath
Her innocent authority was wrought,
Nor could have been, without her blessed name.
The illustrious wife of Roland, in the hour
Of her composure, felt that agony,
And gave it vent in her last words. O Friend !
It was a lamentable time for man,
Whether a hope had e'er been his or not ;
A woful time for them whose hopes survived
The shock ; most woful for those few who still
Were flattered, and had trust in human kind :
They had the deepest feeling of the grief.
Meanwhile the Invaders fared as they deserved :
The Herculean Commonwealth had put forth her
arms,

And throttled with an infant godhead's might
 The snakes about her cradle; that was well,
 And as it should be; yet no cure for them
 Whose souls were sick with pain of what would be
 Hereafter brought in charge against mankind.
 Most melancholy at that time, O Friend!
 Were my day-thoughts,—my nights were miserable;
 Through months, through years, long after the
 last beat

Of those atrocities, the hour of sleep
 To me came rarely charged with natural gifts,
 Such ghastly visions had I of despair
 And tyranny, and implements of death;
 And innocent victims sinking under fear,
 And momentary hope, and worn-out prayer,
 Each in his separate cell, or penned in crowds
 For sacrifice, and struggling with fond mirth
 And levity in dungeons, where the dust
 Was laid with tears. Then suddenly the scene
 Changed, and the unbroken dream entangled me
 In long orations, which I strove to plead
 Before unjust tribunals,—with a voice
 Labouring, a brain confounded, and a sense,
 Death-like, of treacherous desertion, felt
 In the last place of refuge—my own soul.

When I began in youth's delightful prime
 To yield myself to Nature, when that strong
 And holy passion overcame me first,
 Nor day nor night, evening or morn, was free
 From its oppression. But, O Power Supreme!
 Without Whose call this world would cease to
 breathe,

Who from the fountain of Thy grace dost fill
 The veins that branch through every frame of life,
 Making man what he is, creature divine,
 In single or in social eminence,
 Above the rest raised infinite ascents
 When reason that enables him to be
 Is not sequestered—what a change is here!
 How different ritual for this after-worship,
 What countenance to promote this second love!
 The first was service paid to things which lie
 Guarded within the bosom of Thy will.
 Therefore to serve was high beatitude;
 Tumult was therefore gladness, and the fear
 Ennobling, venerable; sleep secure,
 And waking thoughts more rich than happiest
 dreams.

But as the ancient Prophets, borne aloft
 In vision, yet constrained by natural laws
 With them to take a troubled human heart,

Wanted not consolations, nor a creed
 Of reconciliation, then when they denounced,
 On towns and cities, wallowing in the abyss
 Of their offences, punishment to come;
 Or saw, like other men, with bodily eyes,
 Before them, in some desolated place,
 The wrath consummate and the threat fulfilled;
 So, with devout humility be it said,
 So, did a portion of that spirit fall
 On me uplifted from the vantage-ground
 Of pity and sorrow to a state of being
 That through the time's exceeding fierceness saw
 Glimpses of retribution, terrible,
 And in the order of sublime behests:
 But, even if that were not, amid the awe
 Of unintelligible chastisement,
 Not only acquiescences of faith
 Survived, but daring sympathies with power,
 Motions not treacherous or profane, else why
 Within the folds of no ungentle breast
 Their dread vibration to this hour prolonged?
 Wild blasts of music thus could find their way
 Into the midst of turbulent events;
 So that worst tempests might be listened to.
 Then was the truth received into my heart,
 That, under heaviest sorrow earth can bring,
 If from the affliction somewhere do not grow
 Honour which could not else have been, a faith,
 An elevation, and a sanctity,
 If new strength be not given nor old restored,
 The blame is ours, not Nature's. When a taunt
 Was taken up by scoffers in their pride,
 Saying, "Behold the harvest that we reap
 From popular government and equality,"
 I clearly saw that neither these nor aught
 Of wild belief engrafted on their names
 By false philosophy had caused the woe,
 But a terrific reservoir of guilt
 And ignorance filled up from age to age,
 That could no longer hold its loathsome charge,
 But burst and spread in deluge through the land.

And as the desert hath green spots, the sea
 Small islands scattered amid stormy waves,
 So that disastrous period did not want
 Bright sprinklings of all human excellence,
 To which the silver wands of saints in Heaven
 Might point with rapturous joy. Yet not the less,
 For those examples, in no age surpassed,
 Of fortitude and energy and love,
 And human nature faithful to herself
 Under worst trials, was I driven to think
 Of the glad times when first I traversed France
 A youthful pilgrim; above all reviewed

That eventide, when under windows bright
With happy faces and with garlands hung,
And through a rainbow-arch that spanned the
street,

Triumphal pomp for liberty confirmed,
I paced, a dear companion at my side,
The town of Arras, whence with promise high
Issued, on delegation to sustain
Humanity and right, *that Robespierre*,
He who thereafter, and in how short time !
Wielded the sceptre of the Atheist crew.
When the calamity spread far and wide—
And this same city, that did then appear
To outrun the rest in exultation, groaned
Under the vengeance of her cruel son,
As Lear reproached the winds—I could almost
Have quarrelled with that blameless spectacle
For lingering yet an image in my mind
To mock me under such a strange reverse.

O Friend! few happier moments have been mine
Than that which told the downfall of this Tribe
So dreaded, so abhorred. The day deserves
A separate record. Over the smooth sands
Of Leven's ample estuary lay
My journey, and beneath a genial sun,
With distant prospect among gleams of sky
And clouds, and intermingling mountain tops,
In one inseparable glory clad,
Creatures of one ethereal substance met
In consistory, like a diadem
Or crown of burning seraphs as they sit
In the empyrean. Underneath that pomp
Celestial, lay unseen the pastoral vales
Among whose happy fields I had grown up
From childhood. On the fulgent spectacle,
That neither passed away nor changed, I gazed
Enrapt; but brightest things are wont to draw
Sad opposites out of the inner heart,
As even their pensive influence drew from mine.
How could it otherwise? for not in vain
That very morning had I turned aside
To seek the ground where, 'mid a throng of graves,
An honoured teacher of my youth was laid,
And on the stone were graven by his desire
Lines from the churchyard elegy of Gray.
This faithful guide, speaking from his death-bed,
Added no farewell to his parting counsel,
But said to me, "My head will soon lie low;"
And when I saw the turf that covered him,
After the lapse of full eight years, those words,
With sound of voice and countenance of the Man,
Came back upon me, so that some few tears
Fell from me in my own despire. But now

I thought, still traversing that widespread plain,
With tender pleasure of the verses graven
Upon his tombstone, whispering to myself:
He loved the Poets, and, if now alive,
Would have loved me, as one not destitute
Of promise, nor belying the kind hope
That he had formed, when I, at his command,
Began to spin, with toil, my earliest songs.

As I advanced, all that I saw or felt
Was gentleness and peace. Upon a small
And rocky island near, a fragment stood
(Itself like a sea rock) the low remains
(With shells encrusted, dark with briny weeds)
Of a dilapidated structure, once
A Romish chapel, where the vested priest
Said matins at the hour that suited those
Who crossed the sands with ebb of morning tide.
Not far from that still ruin all the plain
Lay spotted with a variegated crowd
Of vehicles and travellers, horse and foot,
Wading beneath the conduct of their guide
In loose procession through the shallow stream
Of inland waters; the great sea meanwhile
Heaved at safe distance, far retired. I paused,
Longing for skill to paint a scene so bright
And cheerful, but the foremost of the band
As he approached, no salutation given
In the familiar language of the day,
Cried, "*Robespierre is dead!*"—nor was a doubt,
After strict question, left within my mind
That he and his supporters all were fallen.

Great was my transport, deep my gratitude
To everlasting Justice, by this fiat
Made manifest. "Come now, ye golden times,"
Said I forth-pouring on those open sands
A hymn of triumph: "as the morning comes
From out the bosom of the night, come ye:
Thus far our trust is verified; behold!
They who with clumsy desperation brought
A river of Blood, and preached that nothing else
Could cleanse the Augean stable, by the might
Of their own helper have been swept away;
Their madness stands declared and visible;
Elsewhere will safety now be sought, and earth
March firmly towards righteousness and peace."—
Then schemes I framed more calmly, when and
how

The madding factions might be tranquillised,
And how through hardships manifold and long
The glorious renovation would proceed.
Thus interrupted by uneasy bursts
Of exultation, I pursued my way

Along that very shore which I had skimmed
In former days, when—spurring from the Vale
Of Nightshade, and St. Mary's mouldering fane,
And the stone abbot, after circuit made

In wantonness of heart, a joyous band
Of school-boys hastening to their distant home
Along the margin of the moonlight sea—
We beat with thundering hoofs the level sand.

BOOK ELEVENTH.

FRANCE.

CONCLUDED.

FROM that time forth, Authority in France
Put on a milder face; Terror had ceased,
Yet everything was wanting that might give
Courage to them who looked for good by light
Of rational Experience, for the shoots
And hopeful blossoms of a second spring:
Yet, in me, confidence was unimpaired;
The Senate's language, and the public acts
And measures of the Government, though both
Weak, and of heartless omen, had not power
To daunt me; in the People was my trust:
And, in the virtues which mine eyes had seen,
I knew that wound external could not take
Life from the young Republic; that new foes
Would only follow, in the path of shame,
Their brethren, and her triumphs be in the end
Treat, universal, irresistible.
This intuition led me to confound
One victory with another, higher far,—
Triumphs of unambitious peace at home,
And noiseless fortitude. Beholding still
Resistance strong as heretofore, I thought
That what was in degree the same was likewise
The same in quality,—that, as the worse
Of the two spirits then at strife remained
Untired, the better, surely, would preserve
The heart that first had roused him. Youth
maintains,
In all conditions of society,
Communion more direct and intimate
With Nature,—hence, oftentimes, with reason too—
Than age or manhood, even. To Nature, then,
Power had reverted: habit, custom, law,
Had left an interregnum's open space
For her to move about in, uncontrolled.
Hence could I see how Babel-like their task,
Tho, by the recent deluge stupified,
With their whole souls went culling from the day
Its petty promises, to build a tower

For their own safety; laughed with my compeers
At gravest heads, by enmity to France
Distempered, till they found, in every blast
Forced from the street-disturbing newsmen's horn,
For her great cause record or prophecy
Of utter ruin. How might we believe
That wisdom could, in any shape, come near
Men clinging to delusions so insane?
And thus, experience proving that no few
Of our opinions had been just, we took
Like credit to ourselves where less was due,
And thought that other notions were as sound,
Yea, could not but be right, because we saw
That foolish men opposed them.

To a strain

More animated I might here give way,
And tell, since juvenile errors are my theme,
What in those days, through Britain, was per-
formed

To turn *all* judgments out of their right course;
But this is passion over-near ourselves,
Reality too close and too intense,
And intermixed with something, in my mind,
Of scorn and condemnation personal,
That would profane the sanctity of verse.
Our Shepherds, this say merely, at that time
Acted, or seemed at least to act, like men
Thirsting to make the guardian crook of law
A tool of murder; they who ruled the State,
Though with such awful proof before their eyes
That he, who would sow death, reaps death, or
worse,

And can reap nothing better, child-like longed
To imitate, not wise enough to avoid;
Or left (by mere timidity betrayed)
The plain straight road, for one no better chosen
Than if their wish had been to undermine
Justice, and make an end of Liberty.

But from these bitter truths I must return
To my own history. It hath been told
That I was led to take an eager part

In arguments of civil polity,
 Abruptly, and indeed before my time :
 I had approached, like other youths, the shield
 Of human nature from the golden side,
 And would have fought, even to the death, to attest
 The quality of the metal which I saw.
 What there is best in individual man,
 Of wise in passion, and sublime in power,
 Benevolent in small societies,
 And great in large ones, I had oft revolved,
 Felt deeply, but not thoroughly understood
 By reason : nay, far from it ; they were yet,
 As cause was given me afterwards to learn,
 Not proof against the injuries of the day ;
 Lodged only at the sanctuary's door,
 Not safe within its bosom. Thus prepared,
 And with such general insight into evil,
 And of the bounds which sever it from good,
 As books and common intercourse with life
 Must needs have given—to the inexperienced
 mind,

When the world travels in a beaten road,
 Guide faithful as is needed—I began
 To meditate with ardour on the rule
 And management of nations ; what it is
 And ought to be ; and strove to learn how far
 Their power or weakness, wealth or poverty,
 Their happiness or misery, depends
 Upon their laws, and fashion of the State.

* O pleasant exercise of hope and joy !
 For mighty were the auxiliars which then stood
 Upon our side, us who were strong in love !
 Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,
 But to be young was very Heaven ! O times,
 In which the meagre, stale, forbidding ways
 Of custom, law, and statute, took at once
 The attraction of a country in romance !
 When Reason seemed the most to assert her rights
 When most intent on making of herself
 A prime enchantress—to assist the work,
 Which then was going forward in her name !
 Not favoured spots alone, but the whole Earth,
 The beauty wore of promise—that which sets
 (As at some moments might not be unfelt
 Among the bowers of Paradise itself)
 The budding rose above the rose full blown.
 What temper at the prospect did not wake
 To happiness unthought of ? The inert
 Were roused, and lively natures rapt away !
 They who had fed their childhood upon dreams,
 The play-fellows of fancy, who had made

All powers of swiftness, subtilty, and strength
 Their ministers,—who in lordly wise had stirred
 Among the grandest objects of the sense,
 And dealt with whatsoever they found there
 As if they had within some lurking right
 To wield it ;—they, too, who of gentle mood
 Had watched all gentle motions, and to these
 Had fitted their own thoughts, schemers mor-
 mild,

And in the region of their peaceful selves ;—
 Now was it that *both* found, the meek and lofty
 Did both find helpers to their hearts' desire,
 And stuff at hand, plastic as they could wish,—
 Were called upon to exercise their skill,
 Not in Utopia,—subterranean fields,—
 Or some secreted island, Heaven knows where !
 But in the very world, which is the world
 Of all of us,—the place where, in the end,
 We find our happiness, or not at all !

Why should I not confess that Earth was the
 To me, what an inheritance, new-fallen,
 Seems, when the first time visited, to one
 Who thither comes to find in it his home ?
 He walks about and looks upon the spot
 With cordial transport, moulds it and remoulds.
 And is half pleased with things that are amiss,
 'Twill be such joy to see them disappear.

An active partisan, I thus convoked
 From every object pleasant circumstance
 To suit my ends ; I moved among mankind
 With genial feelings still predominant ;
 When erring, erring on the better part,
 And in the kinder spirit ; placable,
 Indulgent, as not uninformed that men
 See as they have been taught—Antiquity
 Gives rights to error ; and aware, no less,
 That throwing off oppression must be work
 As well of License as of Liberty ;
 And above all—for this was more than all—
 Not caring if the wind did now and then
 Blow keen upon an eminence that gave
 Prospect so large into futurity ;
 In brief, a child of Nature, as at first,
 Diffusing only those affections wider
 That from the cradle had grown up with me,
 And losing, in no other way than light
 Is lost in light, the weak in the more strong.

In the main outline, such it might be said
 Was my condition, till with open war
 Britain opposed the liberties of France.
 This threw me first out of the pale of love ;

* See p. 161.—*Ed.*

soured and corrupted, upwards to the source,
My sentiments; was not, as hitherto,
A swallowing up of lesser things in great,
But change of them into their contraries;
And thus a way was opened for mistakes
And false conclusions, in degree as gross,
In kind more dangerous. What had been a pride,
Was now a shame; my likings and my loves
Ran in new channels, leaving old ones dry;
And hence a blow that, in maturer age,
Would but have touched the judgment, struck
more deep

unto sensations near the heart: meantime,
As from the first, wild theories were afloat,
To whose pretensions, sedulously urged,
I had but lent a careless ear, assured
That time was ready to set all things right,
And that the multitude, so long oppressed,
Would be oppressed no more.

But when events
Brought less encouragement, and unto these
The immediate proof of principles no more
Could be entrusted, while the events themselves,
Worn out in greatness, stripped of novelty,
Less occupied the mind, and sentiments
Could through my understanding's natural growth
No longer keep their ground, by faith maintained
Of inward consciousness, and hope that laid
Her hand upon her object—evidence
Lacking, of universal application, such
As could not be impeached, was sought elsewhere.

But now, become oppressors in their turn,
Frenemies had changed a war of self-defence
For one of conquest, losing sight of all
Which they had struggled for: up mounted now,
Openly in the eye of earth and heaven,
The scale of liberty. I read her doom,
With anger vexed, with disappointment sore,
But not dismayed, nor taking to the shame
Of a false prophet. While resentment rose
Striving to hide, what nought could heal, the
wounds

Of mortified presumption, I adhered
More firmly to old tenets, and, to prove
Their temper, strained them more; and thus, in
heat

Of contest, did opinions every day
Flow into consequence, till round my mind
They clung, as if they were its life, nay more,
The very being of the immortal soul.

This was the time, when, all things tending fast
To depravation, speculative schemes—

That promised to abstract the hopes of Man
Out of his feelings, to be fixed thenceforth
For ever in a purer element—
Found ready welcome. Tempting region that
For Zeal to enter and refresh herself,
Where passions had the privilege to work,
And never hear the sound of their own names.
But, speaking more in charity, the dream
Flattered the young, pleased with extremes, nor
least

With that which makes our Reason's naked self
The object of its fervour. What delight!
How glorious! in self-knowledge and self-rule,
To look through all the frailties of the world,
And, with a resolute mastery shaking off
Infirmities of nature, time, and place,
Build social upon personal Liberty,
Which, to the blind restraints of general laws
Superior, magisterially adopts
One guide, the light of circumstances, flashed
Upon an independent intellect.
Thus expectation rose again; thus hope,
From her first ground expelled, grew proud once
more.

Oft, as my thoughts were turned to human kind,
I scorned indifference; but, inflamed with thirst
Of a secure intelligence, and sick
Of other longing, I pursued what seemed
A more exalted nature; wished that Man
Should start out of his earthy, worm-like state,
And spread abroad the wings of Liberty,
Lord of himself, in undisturbed delight—
A noble aspiration! yet I feel
(Sustained by worthier as by wiser thoughts)
The aspiration, nor shall ever cease
To feel it;—but return we to our course.

Enough, 'tis true—could such a plea excuse
Those aberrations—had the clamorous friends
Of ancient Institutions said and done
To bring disgrace upon their very names;
Disgrace, of which, custom and written law,
And sundry moral sentiments as props
Or emanations of those institutes,
Too justly bore a part. A veil had been
Uplifted; why deceive ourselves? in sooth,
'Twas even so; and sorrow for the man
Who either had not eyes wherewith to see,
Or, seeing, had forgotten! A strong shock
Was given to old opinions; all men's minds
Had felt its power, and mine was both let loose,
Let loose and goaded. After what hath been
Already said of patriotic love,
Suffice it here to add, that, somewhat stern

In temperament, withal a happy man,
 And therefore bold to look on painful things,
 Free likewise of the world, and thence more bold,
 I summoned my best skill, and toiled, intent
 To anatomise the frame of social life,
 Yea, the whole body of society
 Searched to its heart. Share with me, Friend! the
 wish

That some dramatic tale, endued with shapes
 Livelier, and flinging out less guarded words
 Than suit the work we fashion, might set forth
 What then I learned, or think I learned, of truth,
 And the errors into which I fell, betrayed
 By present objects, and by reasonings false
 From their beginnings, inasmuch as drawn
 Out of a heart that had been turned aside
 From Nature's way by outward accidents,
 And which was thus confounded, more and more
 Misguided, and misleading. So I fared,
 Dragging all precepts, judgments, maxims, creeds,
 Like culprits to the bar; calling the mind,
 Suspiciously, to establish in plain day
 Her titles and her honours; now believing,
 Now disbelieving; endlessly perplexed
 With impulse, motive, right and wrong, the ground
 Of obligation, what the rule and whence
 The sanction; till, demanding formal *proof*,
 And seeking it in every thing, I lost
 All feeling of conviction, and, in fine,
 Sick, wearied out with contrarieties,
 Yielded up moral questions in despair.

This was the crisis of that strong disease,
 This the soul's last and lowest ebb; I drooped,
 Deeming our blessed reason of least use
 Where wanted most: "The lordly attributes
 Of will and choice," I bitterly exclaimed,
 "What are they but a mockery of a Being
 Who hath in no concerns of his a test
 Of good and evil; knows not what to fear
 Or hope for, what to covet or to shun;
 And who, if those could be discerned, would yet
 Be little profited, would see, and ask
 Where is the obligation to enforce?
 And, to acknowledged law rebellious, still,
 As selfish passion urged, would act amiss;
 The dupe of folly, or the slave of crime."

Depressed, bewildered thus, I did not walk
 With scoffers, seeking light and gay revenge
 From indiscriminate laughter, nor sate down
 In reconciliation with an utter waste
 Of intellect; such sloth I could not brook,
 (Too well I loved, in that my spring of life,

Pains-taking thoughts, and truth, their dear re-
 ward)

But turned to abstract science, and there sought
 Work for the reasoning faculty enthroned
 Where the disturbances of space and time—
 Whether in matters various, properties
 Inherent, or from human will and power
 Derived—find no admission. Then it was—
 Thanks to the bounteous Giver of all good!—
 That the beloved Sister in whose sight
 Those days were passed, now speaking in a voice
 Of sudden admonition—like a brook
 That did but *cross* a lonely road, and now
 Is seen, heard, felt, and caught at every turn,
 Companion never lost through many a league—
 Maintained for me a saving intercourse
 With my true self; for, though bedimmed and
 changed

Much, as it seemed, I was no further changed
 Than as a clouded and a waning moon:
 She whispered still that brightness would return
 She, in the midst of all, preserved me still
 A Poet, made me seek beneath that name,
 And that alone, my office upon earth;
 And, lastly, as hereafter will be shown,
 If willing audience fail not, Nature's self,
 By all varieties of human love
 Assisted, led me back through opening day
 To those sweet counsels between head and heart
 Whence grew that genuine knowledge, fraught
 with peace,

Which, through the later sinkings of this cause,
 Hath still upheld me, and upholds me now
 In the catastrophe (for so they dream,
 And nothing less), when, finally to close
 And seal up all the gains of France, a Pope
 Is summoned in, to crown an Emperor—
 This last opprobrium, when we see a people,
 That once looked up in faith, as if to Heaven
 For manna, take a lesson from the dog
 Returning to his vomit; when the sun
 That rose in splendour, was alive, and moved
 In exultation with a living pomp
 Of clouds—his glory's natural retinue—
 Hath dropped all functions by the gods bestowed
 And, turned into a gewgaw, a machine,
 Sets like an Opera phantom.

Thus, O Friend!

Through times of honour and through times of
 shame

Descending, have I faithfully retraced
 The perturbations of a youthful mind
 Under a long-lived storm of great events—
 A story destined for thy ear, who now,

Among the fallen of nations, dost abide
 Where Etna, over hill and valley, casts
 His shadow stretching towards Syracuse,
 The city of Timoleon ! Righteous Heaven !
 How are the mighty prostrated ! They first,
 They first of all that breathe should have awaked
 When the great voice was heard from out the tombs
 Of ancient heroes. If I suffered grief
 For ill-requited France, by many deemed
 A trifier only in her proudest day ;
 Have been distressed to think of what she once
 Promised, now is ; a far more sober cause
 Thine eyes must see of sorrow in a land,
 To the reanimating influence lost
 Of memory, to virtue lost and hope,
 Though with the wreck of loftier years bestrewn.

But indignation works where hope is not,
 And thou, O Friend ! wilt be refreshed. There is
 One great society alone on earth :
 The noble Living and the noble Dead.

Thine be such converse strong and sanative,
 A ladder for thy spirit to reascend
 To health and joy and pure contentedness ;
 To me the grief confined, that thou art gone
 From this last spot of earth, where Freedom now
 Stands single in her only sanctuary ;
 A lonely wanderer art gone, by pain
 Compelled and sickness, at this latter day,
 This sorrowful reverse for all mankind.
 I feel for thee, must utter what I feel :
 The sympathies erewhile in part discharged,
 Gather afresh, and will have vent again :
 My own delights do scarcely seem to me
 My own delights ; the lordly Alps themselves,
 Those rosy peaks, from which the Morning looks
 Abroad on many nations, are no more
 For me that image of pure gladness
 Which they were wont to be. Through kindred
 scenes,

For purpose, at a time, how different !
 Thou tak'st thy way, carrying the heart and soul
 That Nature gives to Poets, now by thought
 Matured, and in the summer of their strength.
 Oh ! wrap him in your shades, ye giant woods,
 On Etna's side ; and thou, O flowery field
 Of Enna ! is there not some nook of thine,
 From the first play-time of the infant world
 Kept sacred to restorative delight,
 When from afar invoked by anxious love ?

Child of the mountains, among shepherds
 reared,
 Ere yet familiar with the classic page,
 I learnt to dream of Sicily ; and lo,
 The gloom, that, but a moment past, was deepened
 At thy command, at her command gives way ;
 A pleasant promise, wafted from her shores,
 Comes o'er my heart : in fancy I behold
 Her seas yet smiling, her once happy vales ;
 Nor can my tongue give utterance to a name
 Of note belonging to that honoured isle,
 Philosopher or Bard, Empedocles,
 Or Archimedes, pure abstracted soul !
 That doth not yield a solace to my grief :
 And, O Theocritus,* so far have some
 Prevailed among the powers of heaven and earth,
 By their endowments, good or great, that they
 Have had, as thou reportest, miracles
 Wrought for them in old time : yea, not unmoved,
 When thinking on my own beloved friend,
 I hear thee tell how bees with honey fed
 Divine Comates, by his impious lord
 Within a chest imprisoned ; how they came
 Laden from blooming grove or flowery field,
 And fed him there, alive, month after month,
 Because the goatherd, blessed man ! had lips
 Wet with the Muses' nectar.

Thus I soothe
 The pensive moments by this calm fire-side,
 And find a thousand bounteous images
 To cheer the thoughts of those I love, and mine.
 Our prayers have been accepted ; thou wilt stand
 On Etna's summit, above earth and sea,
 Triumphant, winning from the invaded heavens
 Thoughts without bound, magnificent designs,
 Worthy of poets who attuned their harps
 In wood or echoing cave, for discipline
 Of heroes ; or, in reverence to the gods,
 'Mid temples, served by sapient priests, and choirs
 Of virgins crowned with roses. Not in vain
 Those temples, where they in their ruins yet
 Survive for inspiration, shall attract
 Thy solitary steps : and on the brink
 Thou wilt recline of pastoral Arethuse ;
 Or, if that fountain be in truth no more,
 Then, near some other spring—which, by the name
 Thou gratest, willingly deceived—
 I see thee linger a glad votary,
 And not a captive pining for his home.

* Theocrit. Idyll. vii. 78.—Ed.

BOOK TWELFTH.

IMAGINATION AND TASTE, HOW
IMPAIRED AND RESTORED.

LONG time have human ignorance and guilt
Detained us, on what spectacles of woe
Compelled to look, and inwardly oppressed
With sorrow, disappointment, vexing thoughts,
Confusion of the judgment, zeal decayed,
And, lastly, utter loss of hope itself
And things to hope for ! Not with these began
Our song, and not with these our song must end,—
Ye motions of delight, that haunt the sides
Of the green hills ; ye breezes and soft airs,
Whose subtle intercourse with breathing flowers,
Feelingly watched, might teach Man's haughty
race

How without injury to take, to give
Without offence ; ye who, as if to show
The wondrous influence of power gently used,
Bend the complying heads of lordly pines,
And, with a touch, shift the stupendous clouds
Through the whole compass of the sky ; ye brooks,
Muttering along the stones, a busy noise
By day, a quiet sound in silent night ;
Ye waves, that out of the great deep steal forth
In a calm hour to kiss the pebbly shore,
Not mute, and then retire, fearing no storm ;
And you, ye groves, whose ministry it is
To interpose the covert of your shades,
Even as a sleep, between the heart of man
And outward troubles, between man himself,
Not seldom, and his own uneasy heart :
Oh ! that I had a music and a voice
Harmonious as your own, that I might tell
What ye have done for me. The morning shines,
Nor heedeth Man's perverseness ; Spring returns,—
I saw the Spring return, and could rejoice,
In common with the children of her love,
Piping on boughs, or sporting on fresh fields,
Or boldly seeking pleasure nearer heaven
On wings that navigate cerulean skies.
So neither were complacency, nor peace,
Nor tender yearnings, wanting for my good
Through these distracted times ; in Nature still
Glorying, I found a counterpoise in her,
Which, when the spirit of evil reached its height
Maintained for me a secret happiness.

This narrative, my Friend ! hath chiefly told
Of intellectual power, fostering love,
Dispensing truth, and, over men and things,
Where reason yet might hesitate, diffusing
Prophetic sympathies of genial faith :
So was I favoured—such my happy lot—
Until that natural graciousness of mind
Gave way to overpressure from the times
And their disastrous issues. What availed,
When spells forbade the voyager to land,
That fragrant notice of a pleasant shore
Wafted, at intervals, from many a bower
Of blissful gratitude and fearless love ?
Dare I avow that wish was mine to see,
And hope that future times *would* surely see,
The man to come, parted, as by a gulph,
From him who had been ; that I could no more
Trust the elevation which had made me one
With the great family that still survives
To illuminate the abyss of ages past,
Sage, warrior, patriot, hero ; for it seemed
That their best virtues were not free from taint
Of something false and weak, that could not stand
The open eye of Reason. Then I said,
“ Go to the Poets, they will speak to thee
More perfectly of purer creatures ;—yet
If reason be nobility in man,
Can aught be more ignoble than the man
Whom they delight in, blinded as he is
By prejudice, the miserable slave
Of low ambition or distempered love ? ”

In such strange passion, if I may once more
Review the past, I warred against myself—
A bigot to a new idolatry—
Like a cowed monk who hath forsworn the world,
Zealously laboured to cut off my heart
From all the sources of her former strength ;
And as, by simple waving of a wand,
The wizard instantaneously dissolves
Palace or grove, even so could I unsoul
As readily by syllogistic words
Those mysteries of being which have made,
And shall continue evermore to make,
Of the whole human race one brotherhood.

What wonder, then, if, to a mind so far
Perverted, even the visible Universe

Fell under the dominion of a taste
 Less spiritual, with microscopic view
 Was scanned, as I had scanned the moral world?

O Soul of Nature! excellent and fair!
 That didst rejoice with me, with whom I, too,
 Rejoiced through early youth, before the winds
 And roaring waters, and in lights and shades
 That marched and countermarched about the hills
 In glorious apparition, Powers on whom
 I daily waited, now all eye and now
 All ear; but never long without the heart
 Employed, and man's unfolding intellect:
 O Soul of Nature! that, by laws divine
 Sustained and governed, still dost overflow
 With an impassioned life, what feeble ones
 Walk on this earth! how feeble have I been
 When thou wert in thy strength! Nor this
 through stroke

Of human suffering, such as justifies
 Remissness and inaptitude of mind,
 But through presumption; even in pleasure pleased
 Unworthily, disliking here, and there
 Liking; by rules of mimic art transferred
 To things above all art; but more,—for this,
 Although a strong infection of the age,
 Was never much my habit—giving way
 To a comparison of scene with scene,
 Bent overmuch on superficial things,
 Pampering myself with meagre novelties
 Of colour and proportion; to the moods
 Of time and season, to the moral power,
 The affections and the spirit of the place,
 Insensible. Nor only did the love
 Of sitting thus in judgment interrupt
 My deeper feelings, but another cause,
 More subtle and less easily explained,
 That almost seems inherent in the creature,
 A twofold frame of body and of mind.
 I speak in recollection of a time
 When the bodily eye, in every stage of life
 The most despotic of our senses, gained
 Such strength in *me* as often held my mind
 In absolute dominion. Gladly here,
 Entering upon abstruser argument,
 Could I endeavour to unfold the means
 Which Nature studiously employs to thwart
 This tyranny, summons all the senses each
 To counteract the other, and themselves,
 And makes them all, and the objects with which all
 Are conversant, subservient in their turn
 To the great ends of Liberty and Power.
 But leave we this: enough that my delights
 (Such as they were) were sought insatiably.

Vivid the transport, vivid though not profound;
 I roamed from hill to hill, from rock to rock,
 Still craving combinations of new forms,
 New pleasure, wider empire for the sight,
 Proud of her own endowments, and rejoiced
 To lay the inner faculties asleep.
 Amid the turns and counterturns, the strife
 And various trials of our complex being,
 As we grow up, such thralldom of that sense
 Seems hard to shun. And yet I knew a maid,
 A young enthusiast, who escaped these bonds;
 Her eye was not the mistress of her heart;
 Far less did rules prescribed by passive taste,
 Or barren intermeddling subtleties,
 Perplex her mind; but, wise as women are
 When genial circumstance hath favoured them,
 She welcomed what was given, and craved no more;
 Whate'er the scene presented to her view
 That was the best, to that she was attuned
 By her benign simplicity of life,
 And through a perfect happiness of soul,
 Whose variegated feelings were in this
 Sisters, that they were each some new delight.
 Birds in the bower, and lambs in the green field,
 Could they have known her, would have loved;
 methought

Her very presence such a sweetness breathed,
 That flowers, and trees, and even the silent hills,
 And every thing she looked on, should have had
 An intimation how she bore herself
 Towards them and to all creatures. God delights
 In such a being; for, her common thoughts
 Are piety, her life is gratitude.

Even like this maid, before I was called forth
 From the retirement of my native hills,
 I loved whate'er I saw: nor lightly loved,
 But most intensely; never dreamt of aught
 More grand, more fair, more exquisitely framed
 Than those few nooks to which my happy feet
 Were limited. I had not at that time
 Lived long enough, nor in the least survived
 The first diviner influence of this world,
 As it appears to unaccustomed eyes.
 Worshipping them among the depth of things,
 As piety ordained; could I submit
 To measured admiration, or to aught
 That should preclude humility and love?
 I felt, observed, and pondered; did not judge,
 Yea, never thought of judging; with the gift
 Of all this glory filled and satisfied.
 And afterwards, when through the gorgeous Alps
 Roaming, I carried with me the same heart:
 In truth, the degradation—howsoever

Induced, effect, in whatsoe'er degree,
Of custom that prepares a partial scale
In which the little oft outweighs the great ;
Or any other cause that hath been named ;
Or lastly, aggravated by the times
And their impassioned sounds, which well might
make

The milder minstrelsies of rural scenes
Inaudible—was transient ; I had known
Too forcibly, too early in my life,
Visitings of imaginative power
For this to last : I shook the habit off
Entirely and for ever, and again
In Nature's presence stood, as now I stand,
A sensitive being, a *creative* soul.

There are in our existence spots of time,
That with distinct pre-eminence retain
A renovating virtue, whence, depressed
By false opinion and contentious thought,
Or aught of heavier or more deadly weight,
In trivial occupations, and the round
Of ordinary intercourse, our minds
Are nourished and invisibly repaired ;
A virtue, by which pleasure is enhanced,
That penetrates, enables us to mount,
When high, more high, and lifts us up when fallen.
This efficacious spirit chiefly lurks
Among those passages of life that give
Profoundest knowledge to what point, and how,
The mind is lord and master—outward sense
The obedient servant of her will. Such moments
Are scattered everywhere, taking their date
From our first childhood. I remember well,
That once, while yet my inexperienced hand
Could scarcely hold a bridle, with proud hopes
I mounted, and we journeyed towards the hills :
An ancient servant of my father's house
Was with me, my encourager and guide :
We had not travelled long, ere some mischance
Disjoined me from my comrade ; and, through fear
Dismounting, down the rough and stony moor
I led my horse, and, stumbling on, at length
Came to a bottom, where in former times
A murderer had been hung in iron chains.
The gibbet-mast had mouldered down, the bones
And iron case were gone ; but on the turf,
Hard by, soon after that fell deed was wrought,
Some unknown hand had carved the murderer's
name.

The monumental letters were inscribed
In times long past ; but still, from year to year,
By superstition of the neighbourhood,
The grass is cleared away, and to this hour

The characters are fresh and visible :
A casual glance had shown them, and I fled,
Faltering and faint, and ignorant of the road :
Then, reascending the bare common, saw
A naked pool that lay beneath the hills,
The beacon on the summit, and, more near,
A girl, who bore a pitcher on her head,
And seemed with difficult steps to force her way
Against the blowing wind. It was, in truth,
An ordinary sight ; but I should need
Colours and words that are unknown to man,
To paint the visionary dreariness
Which, while I looked all round for my lost guide,
Invested moorland waste, and naked pool,
The beacon crowning the lone eminence,
The female and her garments vexed and tossed
By the strong wind. When, in the blessed hours
Of early love, the loved one at my side,
I roamed, in daily presence of this scene,
Upon the naked pool and dreary crags,
And on the melancholy beacon, fell
A spirit of pleasure and youth's golden gleam ;
And think ye not with radiance more sublime
For these remembrances, and for the power
They had left behind ? So feeling comes in aid
Of feeling, and diversity of strength
Attends us, if but once we have been strong.
Oh ! mystery of man, from what a depth
Proceed thy honours. I am lost, but see
In simple childhood something of the base
On which thy greatness stands ; but this I feel,
That from thyself it comes, that thou must give,
Else never canst receive. The days gone by
Return upon me almost from the dawn
Of life : the hiding-places of man's power
Open ; I would approach them, but they close.
I see by glimpses now ; when age comes on,
May scarcely see at all ; and I would give,
While yet we may, as far as words can give,
Substance and life to what I feel, enshrining,
Such is my hope, the spirit of the Past
For future restoration.—Yet another
Of these memorials :—

One Christmas-time,
On the glad eve of its dear holidays,
Feverish, and tired, and restless, I went forth
Into the fields, impatient for the sight
Of those led palfreys that should bear us home ;
My brothers and myself. There rose a crag,
That, from the meeting-point of two highways
Ascending, overlooked them both, far stretched ;
Thither, uncertain on which road to fix
My expectation, thither I repaired,
Scout-like, and gained the summit ; 'twas a day

Tempestuous, dark, and wild, and on the grass
 I sate half-sheltered by a naked wall ;
 Upon my right hand couched a single sheep,
 Upon my left a blasted hawthorn stood ;
 With those companions at my side, I watched,
 Straining my eyes intensely, as the mist
 Gave intermitting prospect of the copse
 And plain beneath. Ere we to school returned,—
 That dreary time,—ere we had been ten days
 Sojourners in my father's house, he died,
 And I and my three brothers, orphans then,
 Followed his body to the grave. The event,
 With all the sorrow that it brought, appeared
 A chastisement ; and when I called to mind
 That day so lately past, when from the crag
 I looked in such anxiety of hope ;
 With trite reflections of morality,
 Yet in the deepest passion, I bowed low
 To God, Who thus corrected my desires ;

And, afterwards, the wind and sleety rain,
 And all the business of the elements,
 The single sheep, and the one blasted tree,
 And the bleak music from that old stone wall,
 The noise of wood and water, and the mist
 That on the line of each of those two roads
 Advanced in such indisputable shapes ;
 All these were kindred spectacles and sounds
 To which I oft repaired, and thence would drink,
 As at a fountain ; and on winter nights,
 Down to this very time, when storm and rain
 Beat on my roof, or, haply, at noon-day,
 While in a grove I walk, whose lofty trees,
 Laden with summer's thickest foliage, rock
 In a strong wind, some working of the spirit,
 Some inward agitations thence are brought,
 Whate'er their office, whether to beguile
 Thoughts over busy in the course they took,
 Or animate an hour of vacant ease.

BOOK THIRTEENTH.

IMAGINATION AND TASTE, HOW IMPAIRED AND RESTORED.

CONCLUDED.

FROM Nature doth emotion come, and moods
 Of calmness equally are Nature's gift :
 This is her glory ; these two attributes
 Are sister horns that constitute her strength.
 Hence Genius, born to thrive by interchange
 Of peace and excitation, finds in her
 His best and purest friend ; from her receives
 That energy by which he seeks the truth,
 From her that happy stillness of the mind
 Which fits him to receive it when unsought.

Such benefit the humblest intellects
 Partake of, each in their degree ; 'tis mine
 To speak, what I myself have known and felt ;
 Smooth task ! for words find easy way, inspired
 By gratitude, and confidence in truth.
 Long time in search of knowledge did I range
 The field of human life, in heart and mind
 Benighted ; but, the dawn beginning now
 To re-appear, 'twas proved that not in vain
 I had been taught to reverence a Power
 That is the visible quality and shape
 And image of right reason ; that matures

Her processes by steadfast laws ; gives birth
 To no impatient or fallacious hopes,
 No heat of passion or excessive zeal,
 No vain conceits ; provokes to no quick turns
 Of self-applauding intellect ; but trains
 To meekness, and exalts by humble faith ;
 Holds up before the mind intoxicate
 With present objects, and the busy dance
 Of things that pass away, a temperate show
 Of objects that endure ; and by this course
 Disposes her, when over-fondly set
 On throwing off incumbrances, to seek
 In man, and in the frame of social life,
 Whate'er there is desirable and good
 Of kindred permanence, unchanged in form
 And function, or, through strict vicissitude
 Of life and death, revolving. Above all
 Were re-established now those watchful thoughts
 Which, seeing little worthy or sublime
 In what the Historian's pen so much delights
 To blazon—power and energy detached
 From moral purpose—early tutored me
 To look with feelings of fraternal love
 Upon the unassuming things that hold
 A silent station in this beauteous world.

Thus moderated, thus composed, I found

Once more in Man an object of delight,
 Of pure imagination, and of love ;
 And, as the horizon of my mind enlarged,
 Again I took the intellectual eye
 For my instructor, studious more to see
 Great truths, than touch and handle little ones.
 Knowledge was given accordingly ; my trust
 Became more firm in feelings that had stood
 The test of such a trial ; clearer far
 My sense of excellence—of right and wrong :
 The promise of the present time retired
 Into its true proportion ; sanguine schemes,
 Ambitious projects, pleased me less ; I sought
 For present good in life's familiar face,
 And built thereon my hopes of good to come.

With settling judgments now of what would last
 And what would disappear ; prepared to find
 Presumption, folly, madness, in the men
 Who thrust themselves upon the passive world
 As Rulers of the world ; to see in these,
 Even when the public welfare is their aim,
 Plans without thought, or built on theories
 Vague and unsound ; and having brought the books
 Of modern statists to their proper test,
 Life, human life, with all its sacred claims
 Of sex and age, and heaven-descended rights,
 Mortal, or those beyond the reach of death ;
 And having thus discerned how dire a thing
 Is worshipped in that idol proudly named
 "The Wealth of Nations," *where* alone that wealth
 Is lodged, and how increased ; and having gained
 A more judicious knowledge of the worth
 And dignity of individual man,
 No composition of the brain, but man
 Of whom we read, the man whom we behold
 With our own eyes—I could not but inquire—
 Not with less interest than heretofore,
 But greater, though in spirit more subdued—
 Why is this glorious creature to be found
 One only in ten thousand ? What one is,
 Why may not millions be ? What bars are thrown
 By Nature in the way of such a hope ?
 Our animal appetites and daily wants,
 Are these obstructions insurmountable ?
 If not, then others vanish into air.
 "Inspect the basis of the social pile :
 Inquire," said I, "how much of mental power
 And genuine virtue they possess who live
 By bodily toil, labour exceeding far
 Their due proportion, under all the weight
 Of that injustice which upon ourselves
 Ourselves entail." Such estimate to frame
 I chiefly looked (what need to look beyond ?)

Among the natural abodes of men,
 Fields with their rural works ; recalled to mind
 My earliest notices ; with these compared
 The observations made in later youth,
 And to that day continued.—For, the time
 Had never been when throes of mighty Nations
 And the world's tumult unto me could yield,
 How far soe'er transported and possessed,
 Full measure of content ; but still I craved
 An intermingling of distinct regards
 And truths of individual sympathy
 Nearer ourselves. Such often might be gleaned
 From the great City, else it must have proved
 To me a heart-depressing wilderness ;
 But much was wanting : therefore did I turn
 To you, ye pathways, and ye lonely roads ;
 Sought you enriched with everything I prized,
 With human kindnesses and simple joys.

Oh ! next to one dear state of bliss, vouchsafed
 Alas ! to few in this untoward world,
 The bliss of walking daily in life's prime
 Through field or forest with the maid we love,
 While yet our hearts are young, while yet we
 breathe
 Nothing but happiness, in some lone nook,
 Deep vale, or any where, the home of both,
 From which it would be misery to stir :
 Oh ! next to such enjoyment of our youth,
 In my esteem, next to such dear delight,
 Was that of wandering on from day to day
 Where I could meditate in peace, and cull
 Knowledge that step by step might lead me on
 To wisdom ; or, as lightsome as a bird
 Wafted upon the wind from distant lands,
 Sing notes of greeting to strange fields or groves,
 Which lacked not voice to welcome me in turn :
 And, when that pleasant toil had ceased to please,
 Converse with men, where if we meet a face
 We almost meet a friend, on naked beaths
 With long long ways before, by cottage bench,
 Or well-spring where the weary traveller rests.

Who doth not love to follow with his eye
 The windings of a public way ? the sight,
 Familiar object as it is, hath wrought
 On my imagination since the morn
 Of childhood, when a disappearing line,
 One daily present to my eyes, that crossed
 The naked summit of a far-off hill
 Beyond the limits that my feet had trod,
 Was like an invitation into space
 Boundless, or guide into eternity.
 Yes, something of the grandeur which invests

The mariner who sails the roaring sea
 Through storm and darkness, early in my mind
 Surrounded, too, the wanderers of the earth ;
 Grandeur as much, and loveliness far more.
 Awed have I been by strolling Bedlamites ;
 From many other uncouth vagrants (passed
 In fear) have walked with quicker step ; but why
 Take note of this ? When I began to enquire,
 To watch and question those I met, and speak
 Without reserve to them, the lonely roads
 Were open schools in which I daily read
 With most delight the passions of mankind,
 Whether by words, looks, sighs, or tears, revealed ;
 There saw into the depth of human souls,
 Souls that appear to have no depth at all
 To careless eyes. And—now convinced at heart
 How little those formalities, to which
 With overweening trust alone we give
 The name of Education, have to do
 With real feeling and just sense ; how vain
 A correspondence with the talking world
 Proves to the most ; and called to make good search
 If man's estate, by doom of Nature yoked
 With toil, be therefore yoked with ignorance ;
 If virtue be indeed so hard to rear,
 And intellectual strength so rare a boon—
 I prized such walks still more, for there I found
 Hope to my hope, and to my pleasure peace
 And steadiness, and healing and repose
 To every angry passion. There I heard,
 From mouths of men obscure and lowly, truths
 Replete with honour ; sounds in unison
 With loftiest promises of good and fair.

There are who think that strong affection, love
 Known by whatever name, is falsely deemed
 A gift, to use a term which they would use,
 Of vulgar nature ; that its growth requires
 Retirement, leisure, language purified
 By manners studied and elaborate ;
 That whose feels such passion in its strength
 Must live within the very light and air
 Of courteous usages refined by art.
 True is it, where oppression worse than death
 Salutes the being at his birth, where grace
 Of culture hath been utterly unknown,
 And poverty and labour in excess
 From day to day pre-occupy the ground
 Of the affections, and to Nature's self
 Oppose a deeper nature ; there, indeed,
 Love cannot be ; nor does it thrive with ease
 Among the close and overcrowded haunts
 Of cities, where the human heart is sick,
 And the eye feeds it not, and cannot feed.

—Yes, in those wanderings deeply did I feel
 How we mislead each other ; above all,
 How books mislead us, seeking their reward
 From judgments of the wealthy Few, who see
 By artificial lights ; how they debase
 The Many for the pleasure of those Few ;
 Effeminately level down the truth
 To certain general notions, for the sake
 Of being understood at once, or else
 Through want of better knowledge in the heads
 That framed them ; flattering self-conceit with
 words,
 That, while they most ambitiously set forth
 Extrinsic differences, the outward marks
 Whereby society has parted man
 From man, neglect the universal heart.

Here, calling up to mind what then I saw,
 A youthful traveller, and see daily now
 In the familiar circuit of my home,
 Here might I pause, and bend in reverence
 To Nature, and the power of human minds,
 To men as they are men within themselves.
 How oft high service is performed within,
 When all the external man is rude in show,—
 Not like a temple rich with pomp and gold,
 But a mere mountain chapel, that protects
 Its simple worshippers from sun and shower.
 Of these, said I, shall be my song ; of these,
 If future years mature me for the task,
 Will I record the praises, making verse
 Deal boldly with substantial things ; in truth
 And sanctity of passion, speak of these,
 That justice may be done, obeisance paid
 Where it is due : thus haply shall I teach,
 Inspire ; through unadulterated ears
 Pour rapture, tenderness, and hope,—my theme
 No other than the very heart of man,
 As found among the best of those who live,
 Not unexalted by religious faith,
 Nor uninformed by books, good books, though few,
 In Nature's presence : thence may I select
 Sorrow, that is not sorrow, but delight ;
 And miserable love, that is not pain
 To hear of, for the glory that redounds
 Therefrom to human kind, and what we are.
 Be mine to follow with no timid step
 Where knowledge leads me : it shall be my pride
 That I have dared to tread this holy ground,
 Speaking no dream, but things oracular ;
 Matter not lightly to be heard by those
 Who to the letter of the outward promise
 Do read the invisible soul ; by men adroit
 In speech, and for communion with the world

Accomplished ; minds whose faculties are then
 Most active when they are most eloquent,
 And elevated most when most admired.
 Men may be found of other mould than these,
 Who are their own upholders, to themselves
 Encouragement, and energy, and will,
 Expressing liveliest thoughts in lively words
 As native passion dictates. Others, too,
 There are among the walks of homely life
 Still higher, men for contemplation framed,
 Shy, and unpractised in the strife of phrase ;
 Meek men, whose very souls perhaps would sink
 Beneath them, summoned to such intercourse :
 Theirs is the language of the heavens, the power,
 The thought, the image, and the silent joy :
 Words are but under-agents in their souls ;
 When they are grasping with their greatest
 strength,
 They do not breathe among them : this I speak
 In gratitude to God, Who feeds our hearts
 For His own service ; knoweth, loveth us,
 When we are unregarded by the world.

Also, about this time did I receive
 Convictions still more strong than heretofore,
 Not only that the inner frame is good,
 And graciously composed, but that, no less,
 Nature for all conditions wants not power
 To consecrate, if we have eyes to see,
 The outside of her creatures, and to breathe
 Grandeur upon the very humblest face
 Of human life. I felt that the array
 Of act and circumstance, and visible form,
 Is mainly to the pleasure of the mind
 What passion makes them ; that meanwhile the
 forms

Of Nature have a passion in themselves,
 That intermingles with those works of man
 To which she summons him ; although the works
 Be mean, have nothing lofty of their own ;
 And that the Genius of the Poet hence
 May boldly take his way among mankind
 Wherever Nature leads ; that he hath stood
 By Nature's side among the men of old,
 And so shall stand for ever. Dearest Friend !
 If thou partake the animating faith
 That Poets, even as Prophets, each with each
 Connected in a mighty scheme of truth,
 Have each his own peculiar faculty,
 Heaven's gift, a sense that fits him to perceive
 Objects unseen before, thou wilt not blame
 The humblest of this band who dares to hope
 That unto him hath also been vouchsafed
 An insight that in some sort he possesses,

A privilege whereby a work of his,
 Proceeding from a source of untaught things,
 Creative and enduring, may become
 A power like one of Nature's. To a hope
 Not less ambitious once among the wilds
 Of Sarum's Plain, my youthful spirit was raised ;
 There, as I ranged at will the pastoral downs
 Trackless and smooth, or paced the bare white
 roads

Lengthening in solitude their dreary line,
 Time with his retinue of ages fled
 Backwards, nor checked his flight until I saw
 Our dim ancestral Past in vision clear ;
 Saw multitudes of men, and, here and there,
 A single Briton clothed in wolf-skin vest,
 With shield and stone-axe, stride across the wold ;
 The voice of spears was heard, the rattling spear
 Shaken by arms of mighty bone, in strength,
 Long mouldered, of barbaric majesty.
 I called on Darkness—but before the word
 Was uttered, midnight darkness seemed to take
 All objects from my sight ; and lo ! again
 The Desert visible by dismal flames ;
 It is the sacrificial altar, fed
 With living men—how deep the groans ! the voice
 Of those that crowd the giant wicker thrills
 The monumental hillocks, and the pomp
 Is for both worlds, the living and the dead.
 At other moments—(for through that wide waste
 Three summer days I roamed) where'er the Plain
 Was figured o'er with circles, lines, or mounds,
 That yet survive, a work, as some divine,
 Shaped by the Druids, so to represent
 Their knowledge of the heavens, and image forth
 The constellations—gently was I charmed
 Into a waking dream, a reverie
 That, with believing eyes, where'er I turned,
 Beheld long-bearded teachers, with white wands
 Uplifted, pointing to the starry sky,
 Alternately, and plain below, while breath
 Of music swayed their motions, and the waste
 Rejoiced with them and me in those sweet sounds.

This for the past, and things that may be viewed
 Or fancied in the obscurity of years
 From monumental hints : and thou, O Friend !
 Pleased with some unpremeditated strains
 That served those wanderings to beguile, hast said
 That then and there my mind had exercised
 Upon the vulgar forms of present things,
 The actual world of our familiar days,
 Yet higher power ; had caught from them a tone,
 An image, and a character, by books
 Not hitherto reflected. Call we this

A partial judgment—and yet why? for *then*
 We were as strangers; and I may not speak
 Thus wrongfully of verse, however rude,
 Which on thy young imagination, trained
 In the great City, broke like light from far.
 Moreover, each man's Mind is to herself
 Witness and judge; and I remember well
 That in life's every-day appearances
 I seemed about this time to gain clear sight

Of a new world—a world, too, that was fit
 To be transmitted, and to other eyes
 Made visible; as ruled by those fixed laws
 Whence spiritual dignity originates,
 Which do both give it being and maintain
 A balance, an ennobling interchange
 Of action from without and from within;
 The excellence, pure function, and best power
 Both of the object seen, and eye that sees.

BOOK FOURTEENTH.

CONCLUSION.

In one of those excursions (may they ne'er
 Fade from remembrance!) through the Northern
 tracts

Of Cambria ranging with a youthful friend,
 I left Bethgelert's huts at couching-time,
 And westward took my way, to see the sun
 Rise, from the top of Snowdon. To the door
 Of a rude cottage at the mountain's base
 We came, and roused the shepherd who attends
 The adventurous stranger's steps, a trusty guide;
 Then, cheered by short refreshment, sallied forth.

It was a close, warm, breezeless summer night,
 Wan, dull, and glaring, with a dripping fog
 Low-hung and thick that covered all the sky;
 But, undiscouraged, we began to climb
 The mountain-side. The mist soon girt us round,
 And, after ordinary travellers' talk
 With our conductor, pensively we sank
 Each into commerce with his private thoughts:
 Thus did we breast the ascent, and by myself
 Was nothing either seen or heard that checked
 Those musings or diverted, save that once
 The shepherd's lurcher, who, among the crags,
 Had to his joy unearthed a hedgehog, teased
 His coiled-up prey with barkings turbulent.
 This small adventure, for even such it seemed
 In that wild place and at the dead of night,
 Being over and forgotten, on we wound
 In silence as before. With forehead bent
 Earthward, as if in opposition set
 Against an enemy, I panted up
 With eager pace, and no less eager thoughts.
 Thus might we wear a midnight hour away,

Ascending at loose distance each from each,
 And I, as chanced, the foremost of the band;
 When at my feet the ground appeared to brighten,
 And with a step or two seemed brighter still;
 Nor was time given to ask or learn the cause,
 For instantly a light upon the turf
 Fell like a flash, and lo! as I looked up,
 The Moon hung naked in a firmament
 Of azure without cloud, and at my feet
 Rested a silent sea of hoary mist.
 A hundred hills their dusky backs upheaved
 All over this still ocean; and beyond,
 Far, far beyond, the solid vapours stretched,
 In headlands, tongues, and promontory shapes,
 Into the main Atlantic, that appeared
 To dwindle, and give up his majesty,
 Usurped upon far as the sight could reach.
 Not so the ethereal vault; encroachment none
 Was there, nor loss; only the inferior stars
 Had disappeared, or shed a fainter light
 In the clear presence of the full-orbed Moon,
 Who, from her sovereign elevation, gazed
 Upon the billowy ocean, as it lay
 All meek and silent, save that through a rift—
 Not distant from the shore whereon we stood,
 A fixed, abysmal, gloomy, breathing-place—
 Mounted the roar of waters, torrents, streams
 Innumerable, roaring with one voice!
 Heard over earth and sea, and, in that hour,
 For so it seemed, felt by the starry heavens.

When into air had partially dissolved
 That vision, given to spirits of the night
 And three chance human wanderers, in calm
 thought
 Reflected, it appeared to me the type
 Of a majestic intellect, its acts

And its possessions, what it has and craves,
 What in itself it is, and would become.
 There I beheld the emblem of a mind
 That feeds upon infinity, that broods
 Over the dark abyss, intent to hear
 Its voices issuing forth to silent light
 In one continuous stream; a mind sustained
 By recognitions of transcendent power,
 In sense conducting to ideal form,
 In soul of more than mortal privilege.
 One function, above all, of such a mind
 Had Nature shadowed there, by putting forth,
 'Mid circumstances awful and sublime,
 That mutual domination which she loves
 To exert upon the face of outward things,
 So moulded, joined, abstracted, so endowed
 With interchangeable supremacy,
 That men, least sensitive, see, hear, perceive,
 And cannot choose but feel. The power, which all
 Acknowledge when thus moved, which Nature thus
 To bodily sense exhibits, is the express
 Resemblance of that glorious faculty
 That higher minds bear with them as their own.
 This is the very spirit in which they deal
 With the whole compass of the universe:
 They from their native selves can send abroad
 Kindred mutations; for themselves create
 A like existence; and, when'er it dawns
 Created for them, catch it, or are caught
 By its inevitable mastery,
 Like angels stopped upon the wing by sound
 Of harmony from Heaven's remotest spheres.
 Them the enduring and the transient both
 Serve to exalt; they build up greatest things
 From least suggestions; ever on the watch,
 Willing to work and to be wrought upon,
 They need not extraordinary calls
 To rouse them; in a world of life they live,
 By sensible impressions not enthralled,
 But by their quickening impulse made more
 prompt
 To hold fit converse with the spiritual world,
 And with the generations of mankind
 Spread over time, past, present, and to come,
 Age after age, till Time shall be no more.
 Such minds are truly from the Deity,
 For they are Powers; and hence the highest bliss
 That flesh can know is theirs—the consciousness
 Of Whom they are, habitually infused
 Through every image and through every thought,
 And all affections by communion raised
 From earth to heaven, from human to divine;
 Hence endless occupation for the Soul,
 Whether discursive or intuitive;

Hence cheerfulness for acts of daily life,
 Emotions which best foresight need not fear,
 Most worthy then of trust when most intense.
 Hence, amid ills that vex and wrongs that crush
 Our hearts—if here the words of Holy Writ
 May with fit reverence be applied—that peace
 Which passeth understanding, that repose
 In moral judgments which from this pure source
 Must come, or will by man be sought in vain.

Oh! who is he that hath his whole life long
 Preserved, enlarged, this freedom in himself?
 For this alone is genuine liberty:
 Where is the favoured being who hath held
 That course unchecked, unerring, and untired,
 In one perpetual progress smooth and bright—
 A humbler destiny have we retraced,
 And told of lapse and hesitating choice,
 And backward wanderings along thorny ways:
 Yet—compassed round by mountain solitudes,
 Within whose solemn temple I received
 My earliest visitations, careless then
 Of what was given me; and which now I range,
 A meditative, oft a suffering man—
 Do I declare—in accents which, from truth
 Deriving cheerful confidence, shall blend
 Their modulation with these vocal streams—
 That, whatsoever falls my better mind,
 Revolving with the accidents of life,
 May have sustained, that, howsoe'er misled,
 Never did I, in quest of right and wrong,
 Tamper with conscience from a private aim;
 Nor was in any public hope the dupe
 Of selfish passions; nor did ever yield
 Wilfully to mean cares or low pursuits,
 But shrunk with apprehensive jealousy
 From every combination which might aid
 The tendency, too potent in itself,
 Of use and custom to bow down the soul
 Under a growing weight of vulgar sense,
 And substitute a universe of death
 For that which moves with light and life informed,
 Actual, divine, and true. To fear and love,
 To love as prime and chief, for there fear ends,
 Be this ascribed; to early intercourse,
 In presence of sublime or beautiful forms,
 With the adverse principles of pain and joy—
 Evil as one is rashly named by men
 Who know not what they speak. By love subsists
 All lasting grandeur, by pervading love;
 That gone, we are as dust.—Behold the fields
 In balmy spring-time full of rising flowers
 And joyous creatures; see that pair, the lamb
 And the lamb's mother, and their tender ways

hall touch thee to the heart ; thou callest this love,
 and not inaptly so, for love it is,
 as it carries thee. In some green bower
 rest, and be not alone, but have thou there
 the One who is thy choice of all the world :
 here linger, listening, gazing, with delight
 impassioned, but delight how pitiable !
 unless this love by a still higher love
 be hallowed, love that breathes not without awe ;
 love that adores, but on the knees of prayer,
 heaven inspired ; that frees from chains the soul,
 lifted, in union with the purest, best,
 of earth-born passions, on the wings of praise
 bearing a tribute to the Almighty's Throne.

This spiritual Love acts not nor can exist
 without Imagination, which, in truth,
 but another name for absolute power
 and clearest insight, amplitude of mind,
 and Reason in her most exalted mood.
 This faculty hath been the feeding source
 of our long labour : we have traced the stream
 from the blind cavern whence is faintly heard
 its natal murmur ; followed it to light
 and open day ; accompanied its course
 among the ways of Nature, for a time
 lost sight of it bewildered and engulfed ;
 when given it greeting as it rose once more
 in strength, reflecting from its placid breast
 the works of man and face of human life ;
 and lastly, from its progress have we drawn
 with life endless, the sustaining thought
 of human Being, Eternity, and God.

Imagination having been our theme,
 we also hath that intellectual Love,
 for they are each in each, and cannot stand
 individually.—Here must thou be, O Man !
 power to thyself ; no Helper hast thou here ;
 here keepest thou in singleness thy state :
 no other can divide with thee this work :
 no secondary hand can intervene
 to fashion this ability ; 'tis thine,
 the prime and vital principle is thine
 in the recesses of thy nature, far
 from any reach of outward fellowship,
 it is not thine at all. But joy to him,
 O joy to him who here hath sown, hath laid
 the foundation of his future years !
 for all that friendship, all that love can do,
 all that a darling countenance can look
 dear voice utter, to complete the man,
 perfect him, made imperfect in himself,

All shall be his : and he whose soul hath risen
 Up to the height of feeling intellect
 Shall want no humbler tenderness ; his heart
 Be tender as a nursing mother's heart ;
 Of female softness shall his life be full,
 Of humble cares and delicate desires,
 Mild interests and gentlest sympathies.

Child of my parents ! Sister of my soul !
 Thanks in sincerest verse have been elsewhere
 Poured out for all the early tenderness
 Which I from thee imbibed : and 'tis most true
 That later seasons owed to thee no less ;
 For, spite of thy sweet influence and the touch
 Of kindred hands that opened out the springs
 Of genial thought in childhood, and in spite
 Of all that unassisted I had marked
 In life or nature of those charms minute
 That win their way into the heart by stealth
 (Still to the very going-out of youth)
 I too exclusively esteemed *that* love,
 And sought *that* beauty, which, as Milton sings,
 Hath terror in it. Thou didst soften down
 This over-sternness ; but for thee, dear Friend !
 My soul, too reckless of mild grace, had stood
 In her original self too confident,
 Retained too long a countenance severe ;
 A rock with torrents roaring, with the clouds
 Familiar, and a favourite of the stars :
 But thou didst plant its crevices with flowers,
 Hang it with shrubs that twinkle in the breeze,
 And teach the little birds to build their nests
 And warble in its chambers. At a time
 When Nature, destined to remain so long
 Foremost in my affections, had fallen back
 Into a second place, pleased to become
 A handmaid to a nobler than herself,
 When every day brought with it some new sense
 Of exquisite regard for common things,
 And all the earth was budding with these gifts
 Of more refined humanity, thy breath,
 Dear Sister ! was a kind of gentler spring
 That went before my steps. Thereafter came
 One whom with thee friendship had early paired ;
 She came, no more a phantom to adorn
 A moment, but an inmate of the heart,
 And yet a spirit, there for me enshrined
 To penetrate the lofty and the low ;
 Even as one essence of pervading light
 Shines, in the brightest of ten thousand stars,
 And, the meek worm that feeds her lonely lamp
 Couched in the dewy grass.

With such a theme,
 Coleridge ! with this my argument, of thee

Shall I be silent? O capacious Soul!
 Placed on this earth to love and understand,
 And from thy presence shed the light of love,
 Shall I be mute, ere thou be spoken of?
 Thy kindred influence to my heart of hearts
 Did also find its way. Thus fear relaxed
 Her over-weening grasp; thus thoughts and things
 In the self-haunting spirit learned to take
 More rational proportions; mystery,
 The incumbent mystery of sense and soul,
 Of life and death, time and eternity,
 Admitted more habitually a mild
 Interposition—a serene delight
 In closelier gathering cares, such as become
 A human creature, howsoever endowed,
 Poet, or destined for a humbler name;
 And so the deep enthusiastic joy,
 The rapture of the hallelujah sent
 From all that breathes and is, was chastened,
 stemmed
 And balanced by pathetic truth, by trust
 In hopeful reason, leaning on the stay
 Of Providence; and in reverence for duty,
 Here, if need be, struggling with storms, and there
 Strewing in peace life's humblest ground with
 herbs,
 At every season green, sweet at all hours.

And now, O Friend! this history is brought
 To its appointed close: the discipline
 And consummation of a Poet's mind,
 In everything that stood most prominent,
 Have faithfully been pictured; we have reached
 The time (our guiding object from the first)
 When we may, not presumptuously, I hope,
 Suppose my powers so far confirmed, and such
 My knowledge, as to make me capable
 Of building up a Work that shall endure.
 Yet much hath been omitted, as need was;
 Of books how much! and even of the other wealth
 That is collected among woods and fields,
 Far more: for Nature's secondary grace
 Hath hitherto been barely touched upon,
 The charm more superficial that attends
 Her works, as they present to Fancy's choice
 Apt illustrations of the moral world,
 Caught at a glance, or traced with curious pains.

Finally, and above all, O Friend! (I speak
 With due regret) how much is overlooked
 In human nature and her subtle ways,
 As studied first in our own hearts, and then
 In life among the passions of mankind,
 Varying their composition and their hue,

Where'er we move, under the diverse shapes
 That individual character presents
 To an attentive eye. For progress meet,
 Along this intricate and difficult path,
 Whate'er was wanting, something had I gained,
 As one of many schoolfellows compelled,
 In hardy independence, to stand up
 Amid conflicting interests, and the shock
 Of various tempers; to endure and note
 What was not understood, though known to be
 Among the mysteries of love and hate,
 Honour and shame, looking to right and left,
 Unchecked by innocence too delicate,
 And moral notions too intolerant,
 Sympathies too contracted. Hence, when called
 To take a station among men, the step
 Was easier, the transition more secure,
 More profitable also; for, the mind
 Learns from such timely exercise to keep
 In wholesome separation the two natures,
 The one that feels, the other that observes.

Yet one word more of personal concern;—
 Since I withdrew unwillingly from France,
 I led an undomestic wanderer's life,
 In London chiefly harboured, whence I roamed,
 Tarrying at will in many a pleasant spot
 Of rural England's cultivated vales
 Or Cambrian solitudes. A youth—(he bore
 The name of Calvert—it shall live, if words
 Of mine can give it life,) in firm belief
 That by endowments not from me withheld
 Good might be furthered—in his last decay
 Enabled me to pause for choice, and walk
 At large and unrestrained, nor damped too soon
 By mortal cares. Himself no Poet, yet
 Far less a common follower of the world,
 He deemed that my pursuits and labours lay
 Apart from all that leads to wealth, or even
 A necessary maintenance insures,
 Without some hazard to the finer sense;
 He cleared a passage for me, and the stream
 Flowed in the bent of Nature.

Having now
 Told what best merits mention, further pains
 Our present purpose seems not to require,
 And I have other tasks. Recall to mind
 The mood in which this labour was begun,
 O Friend! The termination of my course
 Is nearer now, much nearer; yet even then,
 In that distraction and intense desire,
 I said unto the life which I had lived,
 Where art thou? Hear I not a voice from thee?

Which 'tis reproach to hear? Anon I rose
 As if on wings, and saw beneath me stretched
 The vast prospect of the world which I had been
 And was; and hence this Song, which like a lark
 Have protracted, in the unwearied heavens
 Singing, and often with more plaintive voice
 To earth attempered and her deep-drawn sighs,
 Yet centring all in love, and in the end
 All gratulant, if rightly understood.

Whether to me shall be allotted life,
 And, with life, power to accomplish aught of worth,
 That will be deemed no insufficient plea
 For having given the story of myself,
 All uncertain: but, beloved Friend!
 Then, looking back, thou seest, in clearer view
 Than any liveliest sight of yesterday,
 That summer, under whose indulgent skies,
 Upon smooth Quantock's airy ridge we roved
 Unchecked, or loitered 'mid her sylvan combs,
 Thou in bewitching words, with happy heart,
 Didst chaunt the vision of that Ancient Man,
 The bright-eyed Mariner, and rueful woes
 Didst utter of the Lady Christabel;
 And I, associate with such labour, steeped
 In soft forgetfulness the livelong hours,
 Dreaming of him who, joyous hap, was found,
 After the perils of his moonlight ride,
 Near the loud waterfall; or her who sate
 In misery near the miserable Thorn;
 When thou dost to that summer turn thy
 Thoughts,
 And hast before thee all which then we were,
 O thee, in memory of that happiness,
 Will be known, by thee at least, my Friend!
 Alas, that the history of a Poet's mind
 In labour not unworthy of regard:
 O thee the work shall justify itself.

The last and later portions of this gift

Have been prepared, not with the buoyant spirits
 That were our daily portion when we first
 Together wanted in wild Poesy,
 But, under pressure of a private grief,
 Keen and enduring, which the mind and heart,
 That in this meditative history
 Have been laid open, needs must make me feel
 More deeply, yet enable me to bear
 More firmly; and a comfort now hath risen
 From hope that thou art near, and wilt be soon
 Restored to us in renovated health;
 When, after the first mingling of our tears,
 'Mong other consolations, we may draw
 Some pleasure from this offering of my love.

Oh! yet a few short years of useful life,
 And all will be complete, thy race be run,
 Thy monument of glory will be raised;
 Then, though (too weak to tread the ways of truth)
 This age fall back to old idolatry,
 Though men return to servitude as fast
 As the tide ebbs, to ignominy and shame
 By nations sink together, we shall still
 Find solace—knowing what we have learnt to know,
 Rich in true happiness if allowed to be
 Faithful alike in forwarding a day
 Of firmer trust, joint labourers in the work
 (Should Providence such grace to us vouchsafe)
 Of their deliverance, surely yet to come.
 Prophets of Nature, we to them will speak
 A lasting inspiration, sanctified
 By reason, blest by faith: what we have loved,
 Others will love, and we will teach them how;
 Instruct them how the mind of man becomes
 A thousand times more beautiful than the earth
 On which he dwells, above this frame of things
 (Which, 'mid all revolution in the hopes
 And fears of men, doth still remain unchanged)
 In beauty exalted, as it is itself
 Of quality and fabric more divine.

THE EXCURSION.

TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE WILLIAM, EARL OF LONSDALE, K.G.

ETC. ETC.

OFF, through thy fair domains, illustrious Peer !
In youth I roamed, on youthful pleasures bent ;
And mused in rocky cell or sylvan tent,
Beside swift-flowing Lowther's current clear.
—Now, by thy care befriended, I appear
Before thee, LONSDALE, and this Work present,
A token (may it prove a monument !)

Of high respect and gratitude sincere.
Gladly would I have waited till my task
Had reached its close ; but Life is insecure,
And Hope full oft fallacious as a dream :
Therefore, for what is here produced, I ask
Thy favour ; trusting that thou wilt not deem
The offering, though imperfect, premature.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

RYDAL MOUNT, WESTMORELAND,
July 29, 1814.

PREFACE TO THE EDITION OF 1814.

THE Title-page announces that this is only a portion of a poem ; and the Reader must be here apprised that it belongs to the second part of a long and laborious Work, which is to consist of three parts.—The Author will candidly acknowledge that, if the first of these had been completed, and in such a manner as to satisfy his own mind, he should have preferred the natural order of publication, and have given that to the world first ; but, as the second division of the Work was designed to refer more to passing events, and to an existing state of things, than the others were meant to do, more continuous exertion was naturally bestowed upon it, and greater progress made here than in the rest of the poem ; and as this part does not depend upon the preceding, to a degree which will materially injure its own peculiar interest, the Author, complying with the earnest entreaties of some valued Friends, presents the following pages to the Public.

It may be proper to state whence the poem, of which *The Excursion* is a part, derives its Title of *THE RECLUSE*.—Several years ago, when the

Author retired to his native mountains, with the hope of being enabled to construct a literary Work that might live, it was a reasonable thing that he should take a review of his own mind, and examine how far Nature and Education had qualified him for such employment. As subsidiary to this preparation, he undertook to record, in verse, the origin and progress of his own powers, as far as he was acquainted with them. That Work, addressed to a dear Friend, most distinguished for his knowledge and genius, and to whom the Author's Intellect is deeply indebted, has been long finished, and the result of the investigation which gave rise to it was a determination to compose a philosophical poem, containing views of Man, Nature, and Society, and to be entitled, the *Recluse* ; as having for its principal subject the sensations and opinions of a poet living in retirement.—The preparatory poem is biographical, and conducts the history of the Author's mind to the point when he was emboldened to hope that his faculties were sufficiently matured for entering upon the arduous labour which he had proposed to himself ; and the two Works have the

same kind of relation to each other, if he may so express himself, as the ante-chapel has to the body of a gothic church. Continuing this allusion, he may be permitted to add, that his minor Pieces, which have been long before the Public, when they shall be properly arranged, will be found by the tentative Reader to have such connection with the main Work as may give them claim to be likened to the little cells, oratories, and sepulchral recesses, ordinarily included in those edifices.

The Author would not have deemed himself justified in saying, upon this occasion, so much of performances either unfinished, or unpublished, if he had not thought that the labour bestowed by him upon what he has heretofore and now laid before the Public, entitled him to candid attention for such a statement as he thinks necessary to throw light upon his endeavours to please and, he would hope, to benefit his countrymen.—Nothing further need be added, than that the first and third parts of *The Recluse* will consist chiefly of meditations on the Author's own person; and that in the intermediate part (*The Excursion*) the intervention of characters speaking is employed, and something of dramatic form adopted.

It is not the Author's intention formally to announce a system: it was more animating to him to proceed in a different course; and if he shall succeed in conveying to the mind clear thoughts, lively images, and strong feelings, the Reader will have no difficulty in extracting the system for himself. And in the mean time the following passage, taken from the conclusion of the first book of *The Recluse*, may be acceptable as a kind of *Prospectus* to the design and scope of the whole Poem.

On Man, on Nature, and on Human Life,
 In solitude, I oft perceive
 My trains of imagery before me rise,
 Accompanied by feelings of delight
 Pure, or with no unpleasing sadness mixed;
 And I am conscious of affecting thoughts
 And dear remembrances, whose presence soothes
 And elevates the Mind, intent to weigh
 The good and evil of our mortal state.
 To these emotions, whenceso'er they come,
 Whether from breath of outward circumstance,
 Or from the Soul—an impulse to herself—
 Should give utterance in numerous verse.
 Truth, of Grandeur, Beauty, Love, and Hope,
 And melancholy Fear subdued by Faith;
 Blessed consolations in distress;
 Moral strength, and intellectual Power;
 Joy in widest commonality spread;
 The individual Mind that keeps her own
 In solitary retirement, subject there
 To conscience only, and the law supreme
 That intellectual which governs all—
 O! fit audience let me find though few!

So prayed, more gaining than he asked, the Bard—
 In holiest mood. Uraniâ, I shall need
 Thy guidance, or a greater Muse, if such
 Descend to earth or dwell in highest heaven!
 For I must tread on shadowy ground, must sink
 Deep—and, aloft ascending, breathe in worlds
 To which the heaven of heavens is but a veil.
 All strength—all terror, single or in bands,
 That ever was put forth in personal form—
 Jehovah—with his thunder, and the choir
 Of shouting Angels, and the empyreal thrones—
 I pass them unalarmed. Not Chaos, not
 The darkest pit of lowest Erebus,
 Nor aught of blinder vacancy, scooped out
 By help of dreams—can breed such fear and awe
 As fall upon us often when we look
 Into our Minds, into the Mind of Man—
 My haunt, and the main region of my song.
 —Beauty—a living Presence of the earth,
 Surpassing the most fair ideal Forms
 Which craft of delicate Spirits hath composed
 From earth's materials—waits upon my steps;
 Pitches her tents before me as I move,
 An hourly neighbour. Paradise, and groves
 Elysian, Fortunate Fields—like those of old
 Sought in the Atlantic Main—why should they be
 A history only of departed things,
 Or a mere fiction of what never was?
 For the discerning intellect of Man,
 When wedded to this goodly universe
 In love and holy passion, shall find these
 A simple produce of the common day.
 —I, long before the blissful hour arrives,
 Would chant, in lonely peace, the spousal verse
 Of this great consummation —and, by words
 Which speak of nothing more than what we are,
 Would I arouse the sensual from their sleep
 Of Death, and win the vacant and the vain
 To noble raptures; while my voice proclaims
 How exquisitely the individual Mind
 (And the progressive powers perhaps no less
 Of the whole species) to the external World
 Is fitted:—and how exquisitely, too—
 Theme this but little heard of among men—
 The external World is fitted to the Mind;
 And the creation (by no lower name
 Can it be called) which they with blended might
 Accomplish:—this is our high argument.
 —Such grateful haunts foregoing, if I oft
 Must turn elsewhere—to travel near the tribes
 And fellowships of men, and see ill sights
 Of madding passions mutually inflamed;
 Must hear Humanity in fields and groves
 Pipe solitary anguish; or must hang
 Brooding above the fierce confederate storm
 Of sorrow, barricaded evermore
 Within the walls of cities—may these sounds
 Have their authentic comment; that even these
 Hearing, I be not downcast or forlorn!—
 Descend, prophetic Spirit! that inspir'st
 The human Soul of universal earth,
 Dreaming on things to come; and dost possess
 A metropolitan temple in the hearts
 Of mighty Poets: upon me bestow
 A gift of genuine insight; that my Song
 With star-like virtue in its place may shine,
 Shedding benignant influence, and secure,

Itself, from all malevolent effect
 Of those mutations that extend their sway
 Throughout the nether sphere!—And if with this
 I mix more lowly matter ; with the thing
 Contemplated, describe the Mind and Man
 Contemplating ; and who, and what he was—
 The transitory Being that beheld
 This Vision ; when and where, and how he lived ;—
 Be not this labour useless. If such theme

May sort with highest objects, then—dread Power !
 Whose gracious favour is the primal source
 Of all illumination—may my Life
 Express the image of a better time,
 More wise desires, and simpler manners ;—nurse
 My Heart in genuine freedom :—all pure thoughts
 Be with me ;—so shall thy unfailing love
 Guide, and support, and cheer me to the end !

BOOK FIRST.

THE WANDERER.

ARGUMENT.

A summer forenoon.—The Author reaches a ruined Cottage upon a Common, and there meets with a revered Friend, the Wanderer, of whose education and course of life he gives an account.—The Wanderer, while resting under the shade of the Trees that surround the Cottage, relates the History of its last Inhabitant.

'Twas summer, and the sun had mounted high :
 Southward the landscape indistinctly glared
 Through a pale steam ; but all the northern downs,
 In clearest air ascending, showed far off
 A surface dappled o'er with shadows flung
 From brooding clouds ; shadows that lay in spots
 Determined and unmoved, with steady beams
 Of bright and pleasant sunshine interposed ;
 To him most pleasant who on soft cool moss
 Extends his careless limbs along the front
 Of some huge cave, whose rocky ceiling casts
 A twilight of its own, an ample shade,
 Where the wren warbles, while the dreaming man,
 Half conscious of the soothing melody,
 With side-long eye looks out upon the scene,
 By power of that impending covert, thrown,
 To finer distance. Mine was at that hour
 Far other lot, yet with good hope that soon
 Under a shade as grateful I should find
 Rest, and be welcomed there to livelier joy.
 Across a bare wide Common I was toiling
 With languid steps that by the slippery turf
 Were baffled ; nor could my weak arm disperse
 The host of insects gathering round my face,
 And ever with me as I paced along.

Upon that open moorland stood a grove,
 The wished-for port to which my course was bound.
 Thither I came, and there, amid the gloom
 Spread by a brotherhood of lofty elms,
 Appeared a roofless Hut ; four naked walls
 That stared upon each other !—I looked round,

And to my wish and to my hope espied
 The Friend I sought ; a Man of reverend age,
 But stout and hale, for travel unimpaired.
 There was he seen upon the cottage-bench,
 Recumbent in the shade, as if asleep ;
 An iron-pointed staff lay at his side.

Him had I marked the day before—alone
 And stationed in the public way, with face
 Turned toward the sun then setting, while that star
 Afforded, to the figure of the man
 Detained for contemplation or repose,
 Graceful support ; his countenance as he stood
 Was hidden from my view, and he remained
 Unrecognised ; but, stricken by the sight,
 With slackened footsteps I advanced, and soon
 A glad congratulation we exchanged
 At such unthought-of meeting.—For the night
 We parted, nothing willingly ; and now
 He by appointment waited for me here,
 Under the covert of these clustering elms.

We were tried Friends : amid a pleasant vale,
 In the antique market-village where was passed
 My school-time, an apartment he had owned,
 To which at intervals the Wanderer drew,
 And found a kind of home or harbour there.
 He loved me ; from a swarm of rosy boys
 Singled out me, as he in sport would say,
 For my grave looks, too thoughtful for my years
 As I grew up, it was my best delight
 To be his chosen comrade. Many a time,
 On holidays, we rambled through the woods :
 We sate—we walked ; he pleased me with report
 Of things which he had seen ; and often touched
 Abstrusest matter, reasonings of the mind
 Turned inward ; or at my request would sing
 Old songs, the product of his native hills ;
 A skilful distribution of sweet sounds,
 Feeding the soul, and eagerly imbibed
 As cool refreshing water, by the care

Of the industrious husbandman, diffused
Through a parched meadow-ground, in time of
drought.

Still deeper welcome found his pure discourse :
How precious when in riper days I learned
To weigh with care his words, and to rejoice
In the plain presence of his dignity !

Oh ! many are the Poets that are sown
By Nature ; men endowed with highest gifts,
The vision and the faculty divine ;
Yet wanting the accomplishment of verse,
(Which, in the docile season of their youth,
It was denied them to acquire, through lack
Of culture and the inspiring aid of books,
Or haply by a temper too severe,
Or a nice backwardness afraid of shame)
Nor having e'er, as life advanced, been led
By circumstance to take unto the height
The measure of themselves, these favoured Beings,
All but a scattered few, live out their time,
Husbanding that which they possess within,
And go to the grave, unthought of. Strongest minds
Are often those of whom the noisy world
Hears least ; else surely this Man had not left
His graces unrevealed and unproclaimed.
But, as the mind was filled with inward light,
So not without distinction had he lived,
Beloved and honoured—far as he was known.
And some small portion of his eloquent speech,
And something that may serve to set in view
The feeling pleasures of his loneliness,
His observations, and the thoughts his mind
Had dealt with—I will here record in verse ;
Which, if with truth it correspond, and sink
Or rise as venerable Nature leads,
The high and tender Muses shall accept
With gracious smile, deliberately pleased,
And listening Time reward with sacred praise.

Among the hills of Athol he was born ;
Where, on a small hereditary farm,
An unproductive slip of rugged ground,
His Parents, with their numerous offspring, dwelt ;
A virtuous household, though exceeding poor !
Pure livers were they all, austere and grave,
And fearing God ; the very children taught
Firm self-respect, a reverence for God's word,
And an habitual piety, maintained
With strictness scarcely known on English ground.

From his sixth year, the Boy of whom I speak,
A summer, tended cattle on the hills ;
But, through the inclement and the perilous days

Of long-continuing winter, he repaired,
Equipped with satchel, to a school, that stood
Sole building on a mountain's dreary edge,
Remote from view of city spire, or sound
Of minster clock ! From that bleak tenement
He, many an evening, to his distant home
In solitude returning, saw the hills
Grow larger in the darkness ; all alone
Beheld the stars come out above his head,
And travelled through the wood, with no one near
To whom he might confess the things he saw.

So the foundations of his mind were laid.
In such communion, not from terror free,
While yet a child, and long before his time,
Had he perceived the presence and the power
Of greatness ; and deep feelings had impressed
So vividly great objects that they lay
Upon his mind like substances, whose presence
Perplexed the bodily sense. He had received
A precious gift ; for, as he grew in years,
With these impressions would he still compare
All his remembrances, thoughts, shapes, and forms ;
And, being still unsatisfied with aught
Of dimmer character, he thence attained
An active power to fasten images
Upon his brain ; and on their pictured lines
Intensely brooded, even till they acquired
The liveliness of dreams. Nor did he fail,
While yet a child, with a child's eagerness
Incessantly to turn his ear and eye
On all things which the moving seasons brought
To feed such appetite—nor this alone
Appeased his yearning :—in the after-day
Of boyhood, many an hour in caves forlorn,
And 'mid the hollow depths of naked crags
He sate, and even in their fixed lineaments,
Or from the power of a peculiar eye,
Or by creative feeling overborne,
Or by predominance of thought oppressed,
Even in their fixed and steady lineaments
He traced an ebbing and a flowing mind,
Expression ever varying !

Thus informed,
He had small need of books ; for many a tale
Traditionary, round the mountains hung,
And many a legend, peopling the dark woods,
Nourished Imagination in her growth,
And gave the Mind that apprehensive power
By which she is made quick to recognise
The moral properties and scope of things.
But eagerly he read, and read again,
Whate'er the minister's old shelf supplied ;
The life and death of martyrs, who sustained,

With will inflexible, those fearful pangs
Triumphantly displayed in records left
Of persecution, and the Covenant—times
Whose echo rings through Scotland to this hour !
And there, by lucky hap, had been preserved
A straggling volume, torn and incomplete,
That left half-told the preternatural tale,
Romance of giants, chronicle of fiends,
Profuse in garniture of wooden cuts
Strange and uncouth ; dire faces, figures dire,
Sharp-kneed, sharp-elbowed, and lean-ankled too,
With long and ghostly shanks—forms which once
seen
Could never be forgotten !

In his heart,

Where Fear sate thus, a cherished visitant,
Was wanting yet the pure delight of love
By sound diffused, or by the breathing air,
Or by the silent looks of happy things,
Or flowing from the universal face
Of earth and sky. But he had felt the power
Of Nature, and already was prepared,
By his intense conceptions, to receive
Deeply the lesson deep of love which he,
Whom Nature, by whatever means, has taught
To feel intensely, cannot but receive.

Such was the Boy—but for the growing Youth
What soul was his, when, from the naked top
Of some bold headland, he beheld the sun
Rise up, and bathe the world in light ! He looked—
Ocean and earth, the solid frame of earth
And ocean's liquid mass, in gladness lay
Beneath him :—Far and wide the clouds were
touched,

And in their silent faces could he read
Unutterable love. Sound needed none,
Nor any voice of joy ; his spirit drank
The spectacle : sensation, soul, and form,
All melted into him ; they swallowed up
His animal being ; in them did he live,
And by them did he live ; they were his life.
In such access of mind, in such high hour
Of visitation from the living God,
Thought was not ; in enjoyment it expired.
No thanks he breathed, he proffered no request ;
Rapt into still communion that transcends
The imperfect offices of prayer and praise,
His mind was a thanksgiving to the power
That made him ; it was blessedness and love !

A Herdsman on the lonely mountain tops,
Such intercourse was his, and in this sort
Was his existence oftentimes possessed.

O then how beautiful, how bright, appeared
The written promise ! Early had he learned
To reverence the volume that displays
The mystery, the life which cannot die ;
But in the mountains did he *feel* his faith.
All things, responsive to the writing, there
Breathed immortality, revolving life,
And greatness still revolving ; infinite :
There littleness was not ; the least of things
Seemed infinite ; and there his spirit shaped
Her prospects, nor did he believe,—he *saw*.
What wonder if his being thus became
Sublime and comprehensive ! Low desires,
Low thoughts had there no place ; yet was his
heart

Lowly ; for he was meek in gratitude,
Oft as he called those ecstasies to mind,
And whence they flowed ; and from them he
acquired

Wisdom, which works thro' patience ; thence he
learned

In oft-recurring hours of sober thought
To look on Nature with a humble heart,
Self-questioned where it did not understand,
And with a superstitious eye of love.

So passed the time ; yet to the nearest town
He duly went with what small overplus
His earnings might supply, and brought away
The book that most had tempted his desires
While at the stall he read. Among the hills
He gazed upon that mighty orb of song,
The divine Milton. Lore of different kind,
The annual savings of a toilsome life,
His School-master supplied ; books that explain
The purer elements of truth involved
In lines and numbers, and, by charm severe,
(Especially perceived where nature droops
And feeling is suppressed) preserve the mind
Busy in solitude and poverty.
These occupations oftentimes deceived
The listless hours, while in the hollow vale,
Hollow and green, he lay on the green turf
In pensive idleness. What could he do,
Thus daily thirsting, in that lonesome life,
With blind endeavours ? Yet, still uppermost,
Nature was at his heart as if he felt,
Though yet he knew not how, a wasting power
In all things that from her sweet influence
Might tend to wean him. Therefore with her hues,
Her forms, and with the spirit of her forms,
He clothed the nakedness of austere truth.
While yet he lingered in the rudiments
Of science, and among her simplest laws,

His triangles—they were the stars of heaven,
The silent stars! Oft did he take delight
To measure the altitude of some tall crag
That is the eagle's birth-place, or some peak
Familiar with forgotten years, that shows
Inscribed upon its visionary sides,
The history of many a winter storm,
Or obscure records of the path of fire.

And thus before his eighteenth year was told,
Accumulated feelings pressed his heart
With still increasing weight; he was o'erpowered
By Nature; by the turbulence subdued
Of his own mind; by mystery and hope,
And the first virgin passion of a soul
Communing with the glorious universe.
Full often wished he that the winds might rage
When they were silent: far more fondly now
Than in his earlier season did he love
Tempestuous nights—the conflict and the sounds
That live in darkness. From his intellect
And from the stillness of abstracted thought
He asked repose; and, failing oft to win
The peace required, he scanned the laws of light
Amid the roar of torrents, where they send
From hollow clefts up to the clearer air
A cloud of mist, that smitten by the sun
Varies its rainbow hues. But vainly thus,
And vainly by all other means, he strove
To mitigate the fever of his heart.

In dreams, in study, and in ardent thought,
Thus was he reared; much wanting to assist
The growth of intellect, yet gaining more,
And every moral feeling of his soul
Strengthened and braced, by breathing in content
The keen, the wholesome, air of poverty,
And drinking from the well of homely life.
—But, from past liberty, and tried restraints,
He now was summoned to select the course
Of humble industry that promised best
To yield him no unworthy maintenance.
Urged by his Mother, he essayed to teach
The village-school—but wandering thoughts were then
A misery to him; and the Youth resigned
The task he was unable to perform.

That stern yet kindly Spirit, who constrains
The Savoyard to quit his naked rocks,
The free-born Swiss to leave his narrow vales,
The spirit attached to regions mountainous
(the their own steadfast clouds) did now impel
His restless mind to look abroad with hope.
An irksome drudgery seems it to plod on,

Through hot and dusty ways, or pelting storm,
A vagrant Merchant under a heavy load
Bent as he moves, and needing frequent rest;
Yet do such travellers find their own delight;
And their hard service, deemed debasing now,
Gained merited respect in simpler times;
When squire, and priest, and they who round them
dwelt

In rustic sequestration—all dependent
Upon the PEDLAR's toil—supplied their wants,
Or pleased their fancies, with the wares he brought.
Not ignorant was the Youth that still no few
Of his adventurous countrymen were led
By perseverance in this track of life
To competence and ease:—to him it offered
Attractions manifold;—and this he chose.
—His Parents on the enterprise bestowed
Their farewell benediction, but with hearts
Foreboding evil. From his native hills
He wandered far; much did he see of men,
Their manners, their enjoyments, and pursuits,
Their passions and their feelings; chiefly those
Essential and eternal in the heart,
That, 'mid the simpler forms of rural life,
Exist more simple in their elements,
And speak a plainer language. In the woods,
A lone Enthusiast, and among the fields,
Itinerant in this labour, he had passed
The better portion of his time; and there
Spontaneously had his affections thriven
Amid the bounties of the year, the peace
And liberty of nature; there he kept
In solitude and solitary thought
His mind in a just equipoise of love.
Serene it was, unclouded by the cares
Of ordinary life; unvexed, unwarped
By partial bondage. In his steady course,
No piteous revolutions had he felt,
No wild varieties of joy and grief.
Unoccupied by sorrow of its own,
His heart lay open; and, by nature tuned
And constant disposition of his thoughts
To sympathy with man, he was alive
To all that was enjoyed where'er he went,
And all that was endured; for, in himself
Happy, and quiet in his cheerfulness,
He had no painful pressure from without
That made him turn aside from wretchedness
With coward fears. He could *afford* to suffer
With those whom he saw suffer. Hence it came
That in our best experience he was rich,
And in the wisdom of our daily life.
For hence, minutely, in his various rounds,
He had observed the progress and decay

Of many minds, of minds and bodies too ;
 The history of many families ;
 How they had prospered ; how they were o'erthrown
 By passion or mischance, or such misrule
 Among the unthinking masters of the earth
 As makes the nations groan.

This active course

He followed till provision for his wants
 Had been obtained ;—the Wanderer then resolved
 To pass the remnant of his days, untasked
 With needless services, from hardship free.
 His calling laid aside, he lived at ease :
 But still he loved to pace the public roads
 And the wild paths ; and, by the summer's warmth
 Invited, often would he leave his home
 And journey far, revisiting the scenes
 That to his memory were most endeared.
 —Vigorous in health, of hopeful spirits, undamped
 By worldly-mindedness or anxious care ;
 Observant, studious, thoughtful, and refreshed
 By knowledge gathered up from day to day ;
 Thus had he lived a long and innocent life.

The Scottish Church, both on himself and those
 With whom from childhood he grew up, had held
 The strong hand of her purity ; and still
 Had watched him with an unrelenting eye.
 This he remembered in his riper age
 With gratitude, and reverential thoughts.
 But by the native vigour of his mind,
 By his habitual wanderings out of doors,
 By loneliness, and goodness, and kind works,
 Whate'er, in docile childhood or in youth,
 He had imbibed of fear or darker thought
 Was melted all away ; so true was this,
 That sometimes his religion seemed to me
 Self-taught, as of a dreamer in the woods ;
 Who to the model of his own pure heart
 Shaped his belief, as grace divine inspired,
 And human reason dictated with awe.
 —And surely never did there live on earth
 A man of kindlier nature. The rough sports
 And teasing ways of children vexed not him ;
 Indulgent listener was he to the tongue
 Of garrulous age ; nor did the sick man's tale,
 To his fraternal sympathy addressed,
 Obtain reluctant hearing.

Plain his garb ;

Such as might suit a rustic Sire, prepared
 For sabbath duties ; yet he was a man
 Whom no one could have passed without remark.
 Active and nervous was his gait ; his limbs
 And his whole figure breathed intelligence.
 Time had compressed the freshness of his cheek

Into a narrower circle of deep red,
 But had not tamed his eye ; that, under brows
 Shaggy and grey, had meanings which it brought
 From years of youth ; which, like a Being made
 Of many Beings, he had wondrous skill
 To blend with knowledge of the years to come,
 Human, or such as lie beyond the grave.

So was He framed ; and such his course of life
 Who now, with no appendage but a staff,
 The prized memorial of relinquished toils,
 Upon that cottage-bench reposed his limbs,
 Screened from the sun. Supine the Wanderer lay,
 His eyes as if in drowsiness half shut,
 The shadows of the breezy elms above
 Dappling his face. He had not heard the sound
 Of my approaching steps, and in the shade
 Unnoticed did I stand some minutes' space.
 At length I hailed him, seeing that his hat
 Was moist with water-drops, as if the brim
 Had newly scooped a running stream. He rose,
 And ere our lively greeting into peace
 Had settled, "Tis," said I, "a burning day :
 My lips are parched with thirst, but you, it seems
 Have somewhere found relief." He, at the word,
 Pointing towards a sweet-briar, bade me climb
 The fence where that aspiring shrub looked out
 Upon the public way. It was a plot
 Of garden ground run wild, its matted weeds
 Marked with the steps of those, whom, as they passed,
 The gooseberry trees that shot in long lank slips,
 Or currants, hanging from their leafless stems,
 In scanty strings, had tempted to o'erleap
 The broken wall. I looked around, and there,
 Where two tall hedge-rows of thick alder boughs
 Joined in a cold damp nook, espied a well
 Shrouded with willow-flowers and plummy fern.
 My thirst I slaked, and, from the cheerless spot
 Withdrawing, straightway to the shade returned
 Where sate the old Man on the cottage-bench ;
 And, while, beside him, with uncovered head,
 I yet was standing, freely to respire,
 And cool my temples in the fanning air,
 Thus did he speak. "I see around me here
 Things which you cannot see : we die, my Friend,
 Nor we alone, but that which each man loved
 And prized in his peculiar nook of earth
 Dies with him, or is changed ; and very soon
 Even of the good is no memorial left.
 —The Poets, in their elegies and songs
 Lamenting the departed, call the groves,
 They call upon the hills and streams to mourn,
 And senseless rocks ; nor idly ; for they speak,

In these their invocations, with a voice
 Obedient to the strong creative power
 Of human passion. Sympathies there are
 More tranquil, yet perhaps of kindred birth,
 That steal upon the meditative mind,
 And grow with thought. Beside yon spring I stood,
 And eyed its waters till we seemed to feel
 One sadness, they and I. For them a bond
 Of brotherhood is broken : time has been
 When, every day, the touch of human hand
 Dislodged the natural sleep that binds them up
 In mortal stillness ; and they ministered
 To human comfort. Stooping down to drink,
 Upon the slimy foot-stone I espied
 The useless fragment of a wooden bowl,
 Green with the moss of years, and subject only
 To the soft handling of the elements :
 There let it lie—how foolish are such thoughts !
 Forgive them ;—never—never did my steps
 Approach this door but she who dwelt within
 A daughter's welcome gave me, and I loved her
 As my own child. Oh, Sir ! the good die first,
 And they whose hearts are dry as summer dust
 Burn to the socket. Many a passenger
 Hath blessed poor Margaret for her gentle looks,
 When she upheld the cool refreshment drawn
 From that forsaken spring ; and no one came
 But he was welcome ; no one went away
 But that it seemed she loved him. She is dead,
 The light extinguished of her lonely hut,
 The hut itself abandoned to decay,
 And she forgotten in the quiet grave.

"I speak," continued he, "of One whose stock
 Of virtues bloomed beneath this lowly roof.
 She was a Woman of a steady mind,
 Tender and deep in her excess of love ;
 Not speaking much, pleased rather with the joy
 Of her own thoughts : by some especial care
 Her temper had been framed, as if to make
 A Being, who by adding love to peace
 Might live on earth a life of happiness.
 Her wedded Partner lacked not on his side
 The humble worth that satisfied her heart :
 Frugal, affectionate, sober, and withal
 Keenly industrious. She with pride would tell
 That he was often seated at his loom,
 In summer, ere the mower was abroad
 Among the dewy grass,—in early spring,
 Ere the last star had vanished.—They who passed
 At evening, from behind the garden fence
 Might hear his busy spade, which he would ply,
 After his daily work, until the light
 Had failed, and every leaf and flower were lost

In the dark hedges. So their days were spent
 In peace and comfort ; and a pretty boy
 Was their best hope, next to the God in heaven.

Not twenty years ago, but you I think
 Can scarcely bear it now in mind, there came
 Two blighting seasons, when the fields were left
 With half a harvest. It pleased Heaven to add
 A worse affliction in the plague of war :
 This happy Land was stricken to the heart !
 A Wanderer then among the cottages,
 I, with my freight of winter raiment, saw
 The hardships of that season : many rich
 Sank down, as in a dream, among the poor ;
 And of the poor did many cease to be,
 And their place knew them not. Meanwhile,
 abridged

Of daily comforts, gladly reconciled
 To numerous self-denials, Margaret
 Went struggling on through those calamitous years
 With cheerful hope, until the second autumn,
 When her life's Helpmate on a sick-bed lay,
 Smitten with perilous fever. In disease
 He lingered long ; and, when his strength returned,
 He found the little he had stored, to meet
 The hour of accident or crippling age,
 Was all consumed. A second infant now
 Was added to the troubles of a time
 Laden, for them and all of their degree,
 With care and sorrow : shoals of artisans
 From ill-requited labour turned adrift
 Sought daily bread from public charity,
 They, and their wives and children—happier far
 Could they have lived as do the little birds
 That peck along the hedge-rows, or the kite
 That makes her dwelling on the mountain rocks !

A sad reverse it was for him who long
 Had filled with plenty, and possessed in peace,
 This lonely Cottage. At the door he stood,
 And whistled many a snatch of merry tunes
 That had no mirth in them ; or with his knife
 Carved uncouth figures on the heads of sticks—
 Then, not less idly, sought, through every nook
 In house or garden, any casual work
 Of use or ornament ; and with a strange,
 Amusing, yet uneasy, novelty,
 He mingled, where he might, the various tasks
 Of summer, autumn, winter, and of spring.
 But this endured not ; his good humour soon
 Became a weight in which no pleasure was :
 And poverty brought on a petted mood
 And a sore temper : day by day he drooped,
 And he would leave his work—and to the town

Would turn without an errand his slack steps ;
Or wander here and there among the fields.
One while he would speak lightly of his babes,
And with a cruel tongue : at other times
He tossed them with a false unnatural joy :
And 'twas a rueful thing to see the looks
Of the poor innocent children. ' Every smile,'
Said Margaret to me, here beneath these trees,
' Made my heart bleed.' "

At this the Wanderer paused ;
And, looking up to those enormous elms,
He said, " 'Tis now the hour of deepest noon.
At this still season of repose and peace,
This hour when all things which are not at rest
Are cheerful ; while this multitude of flies
With tuneful hum is filling all the air ;
Why should a tear be on an old Man's cheek ?
Why should we thus, with an untoward mind,
And in the weakness of humanity,
From natural wisdom turn our hearts away ;
To natural comfort shut our eyes and ears ;
And, feeding on disquiet, thus disturb
The calm of nature with our restless thoughts ? "

He spake with somewhat of a solemn tone :
But, when he ended, there was in his face
Such easy cheerfulness, a look so mild,
That for a little time it stole away
All recollection ; and that simple tale
Passed from my mind like a forgotten sound.
A while on trivial things we held discourse,
To me soon tasteless. In my own despite,
I thought of that poor Woman as of one
Whom I had known and loved. He had rehearsed
Her homely tale with such familiar power,
With such an active countenance, an eye
So busy, that the things of which he spake
Seemed present ; and, attention now relaxed,
A heart-felt chillness crept along my veins.
I rose ; and, having left the breezy shade,
Stood drinking comfort from the warmer sun,
That had not cheered me long—ere, looking round
Upon that tranquil Ruin, I returned,
And begged of the old Man that, for my sake,
He would resume his story.

He replied,
" It were a wantonness, and would demand
Severe reproof, if we were men whose hearts
Could hold vain dalliance with the misery
Even of the dead ; contented thence to draw
A momentary pleasure, never marked
By reason, barren of all future good.

But we have known that there is often found
In mournful thoughts, and always might be found
A power to virtue friendly ; wer't not so,
I am a dreamer among men, indeed
An idle dreamer ! 'Tis a common tale,
An ordinary sorrow of man's life,
A tale of silent suffering, hardly clothed
In bodily form.—But without further bidding
I will proceed.

While thus it fared with them,
To whom this cottage, till those hapless years,
Had been a blessed home, it was my chance
To travel in a country far remote ;
And when these lofty elms once more appeared
What pleasant expectations lured me on
O'er the flat Common !—With quick step I reached
The threshold, lifted with light hand the latch ;
But, when I entered, Margaret looked at me
A little while ; then turned her head away
Speechless,—and, sitting down upon a chair,
Wept bitterly. I wist not what to do,
Nor how to speak to her. Poor Wretch ! at last
She rose from off her seat, and then,—O Sir !
I cannot tell how she pronounced my name :—
With fervent love, and with a face of grief
Unutterably helpless, and a look
That seemed to cling upon me, she enquired
If I had seen her husband. As she spake
A strange surprise and fear came to my heart,
Nor had I power to answer ere she told
That he had disappeared—not two months gone.
He left his house : two wretched days had past,
And on the third, as wistfully she raised
Her head from off her pillow, to look forth,
Like one in trouble, for returning light,
Within her chamber-casement she espied
A folded paper, lying as if placed
To meet her waking eyes. This tremblingly
She opened—found no writing, but beheld
Pieces of money carefully enclosed,
Silver and gold. ' I shuddered at the sight,'
Said Margaret, ' for I knew it was his hand
That must have placed it there ; and ere that day
Was ended, that long anxious day, I learned,
From one who by my husband had been sent
With the sad news, that he had joined a troop
Of soldiers, going to a distant land.
—He left me thus—he could not gather heart
To take a farewell of me ; for he feared
That I should follow with my babes, and sink
Beneath the misery of that wandering life.'

This tale did Margaret tell with many tears :
And, when she ended, I had little power

To give her comfort, and was glad to take
 Such words of hope from her own mouth as served
 To cheer us both. But long we had not talked
 Ere we built up a pile of better thoughts,
 And with a brighter eye she looked around
 As if she had been shedding tears of joy.
 We parted.—'Twas the time of early spring ;
 I left her busy with her garden tools ;
 And well remember, o'er that fence she looked,
 And, while I paced along the foot-way path,
 Called out, and sent a blessing after me,
 With tender cheerfulness, and with a voice
 That seemed the very sound of happy thoughts.

I roved o'er many a hill and many a dale,
 With my accustomed load ; in heat and cold,
 Through many a wood and many an open ground,
 In sunshine and in shade, in wet and fair,
 Drooping or blithe of heart, as might befall ;
 My best companions now the driving winds,
 And now the 'trotting brooks' and whispering
 trees,
 And now the music of my own sad steps,
 With many a short-lived thought that passed
 between,
 And disappeared.

I journeyed back this way,
 When, in the warmth of midsummer, the wheat
 Was yellow ; and the soft and bladed grass,
 Springing afresh, had o'er the hay-field spread
 Its tender verdure. At the door arrived,
 I found that she was absent. In the shade,
 Where now we sit, I waited her return.
 Her cottage, then a cheerful object, wore
 Its customary look,—only, it seemed,
 The honeysuckle, crowding round the porch,
 Hung down in heavier tufts ; and that bright weed,
 The yellow stone-crop, suffered to take root
 Along the window's edge, profusely grew
 Blinding the lower panes. I turned aside,
 And strolled into her garden. It appeared
 To lag behind the season, and had lost
 Its pride of neatness. Daisy-flowers and thrift
 Had broken their trim border-lines, and straggled
 O'er paths they used to deck : carnations, once
 Prized for surpassing beauty, and no less
 For the peculiar pains they had required,
 Declined their languid heads, wanting support.
 The cumbrous bind-weed, with its wreaths and bells,
 Had twined about her two small rows of peas,
 And dragged them to the earth.

Ere this an hour
 Was wasted.—Back I turned my restless steps ;
 A stranger passed ; and, guessing whom I sought.

He said that she was used to ramble far.—
 The sun was sinking in the west ; and now
 I sat with sad impatience. From within
 Her solitary infant cried aloud ;
 Then, like a blast that dies away self-stilled,
 The voice was silent. From the bench I rose ;
 But neither could divert nor soothe my thoughts.
 The spot, though fair, was very desolate—
 The longer I remained, more desolate :
 And, looking round me, now I first observed
 The corner stones, on either side the porch,
 With dull red stains discoloured, and stuck o'er
 With tufts and hairs of wool, as if the sheep,
 That fed upon the Common, thither came
 Familiarly, and found a couching-place
 Even at her threshold. Deeper shadows fell
 From these tall elms ; the cottage-clock struck
 eight ;—

I turned, and saw her distant a few steps.
 Her face was pale and thin—her figure, too,
 Was changed. As she unlocked the door, she said,
 'It grieves me you have waited here so long,
 But, in good truth, I've wandered much of late ;
 And, sometimes—to my shame I speak—have need
 Of my best prayers to bring me back again.'
 While on the board she spread our evening meal,
 She told me—interrupting not the work
 Which gave employment to her listless hands—
 That she had parted with her elder child ;
 To a kind master on a distant farm
 Now happily apprenticed.—'I perceive
 You look at me, and you have cause ; to-day
 I have been travelling far ; and many days
 About the fields I wander, knowing this
 Only, that what I seek I cannot find ;
 And so I waste my time : for I am changed ;
 And to myself,' said she, 'have done much wrong
 And to this helpless infant. I have slept
 Weeping, and weeping have I waked ; my tears
 Have flowed as if my body were not such
 As others are ; and I could never die.
 But I am now in mind and in my heart
 More easy ; and I hope,' said she, 'that God
 Will give me patience to endure the things
 Which I behold at home.'

It would have grieved
 Your very soul to see her. Sir, I feel
 The story linger in my heart ; I fear
 'Tis long and tedious ; but my spirit clings
 To that poor Woman :—so familiarly
 Do I perceive her manner, and her look,
 And presence ; and so deeply do I feel
 Her goodness, that, not seldom, in my walks
 A momentary trance comes over me ;

And to myself I seem to muse on One
 By sorrow laid asleep ; or borne away,
 A human being destined to awake
 To human life, or something very near
 To human life, when he shall come again
 For whom she suffered. Yes, it would have grieved
 Your very soul to see her : evermore
 Her eyelids drooped, her eyes downward were cast ;
 And, when she at her table gave me food,
 She did not look at me. Her voice was low,
 Her body was subdued. In every act,
 Pertaining to her house-affairs, appeared
 The careless stillness of a thinking mind
 Self-occupied ; to which all outward things
 Are like an idle matter. Still she sighed,
 But yet no motion of the breast was seen,
 No heaving of the heart. While by the fire
 We sate together, sighs came on my ear,
 I knew not how, and hardly whence they came.

Ere my departure, to her care I gave,
 For her son's use, some tokens of regard,
 Which with a look of welcome she received ;
 And I exhorted her to place her trust
 In God's good love, and seek his help by prayer.
 I took my staff, and, when I kissed her babe,
 The tears stood in her eyes. I left her then
 With the best hope and comfort I could give :
 She thanked me for my wish ;—but for my hope
 It seemed she did not thank me.

I returned,
 And took my rounds along this road again
 When on its sunny bank the primrose flower
 Peeped forth, to give an earnest of the Spring.
 I found her sad and drooping : she had learned
 No tidings of her husband ; if he lived,
 She knew not that he lived ; if he were dead,
 She knew not he was dead. She seemed the same
 In person and appearance ; but her house
 Bespake a sleepy hand of negligence ;
 The floor was neither dry nor neat, the hearth
 Was comfortless, and her small lot of books,
 Which, in the cottage-window, heretofore
 Had been piled up against the corner panes
 In seemly order, now, with straggling leaves
 Lay scattered here and there, open or shut,
 As they had chanced to fall. Her infant Babe
 Had from its Mother caught the trick of grief,
 And sighed among its playthings. I withdrew,
 And once again entering the garden saw,
 More plainly still, that poverty and grief
 Were now come nearer to her : weeds defaced
 The hardened soil, and knots of withered grass :
 No ridges there appeared of clear black mold,

No winter greenness ; of her herbs and flowers,
 It seemed the better part were gnawed away
 Or trampled into earth ; a chain of straw,
 Which had been twined about the slender stem
 Of a young apple-tree, lay at its root ;
 The bark was nibbled round by truant sheep.
 —Margaret stood near, her infant in her arms,
 And, noting that my eye was on the tree,
 She said, 'I fear it will be dead and gone
 Ere Robert come again.' When to the House
 We had returned together, she enquired
 If I had any hope :—but for her babe
 And for her little orphan boy, she said,
 She had no wish to live, that she must die
 Of sorrow. Yet I saw the idle loom
 Still in its place ; his sunday garments hung
 Upon the self-same nail ; his very staff
 Stood undisturbed behind the door.

And when,

In bleak December, I retraced this way,
 She told me that her little babe was dead,
 And she was left alone. She now, released
 From her maternal cares, had taken up
 The employment common through these wilds, and
 gained,

By spinning hemp, a pittance for herself ;
 And for this end had hired a neighbour's boy
 To give her needful help. That very time
 Most willingly she put her work aside,
 And walked with me along the miry road,
 Heedless how far ; and, in such piteous sort
 That any heart had ached to hear her, begged
 That, wheresoe'er I went, I still would ask
 For him whom she had lost. We parted then—
 Our final parting ; for from that time forth
 Did many seasons pass ere I returned
 Into this tract again.

Nine tedious years ;
 From their first separation, nine long years,
 She lingered in unquiet widowhood ;
 A Wife and Widow. Needs must it have been
 A sore heart-wasting ! I have heard, my Friend,
 That in yon arbour oftentimes she sate
 Alone, through half the vacant sabbath day ;
 And, if a dog passed by, she still would quit
 The shade, and look abroad. On this old bench
 For hours she sate ; and evermore her eye
 Was busy in the distance, shaping things
 That made her heart beat quick. You see that path,
 Now faint,—the grass has crept o'er its grey line ;
 There, to and fro, she paced through many a day
 Of the warm summer, from a belt of hemp
 That girt her waist, spinning the long-drawn thread
 With backward steps. Yet ever as there passed

A man whose garments showed the soldier's red,
 Or crippled mendicant in sailor's garb,
 The little child who sate to turn the wheel
 Ceased from his task ; and she with faltering voice
 Made many a fond enquiry ; and when they,
 Whose presence gave no comfort, were gone by,
 Her heart was still more sad. And by yon gate,
 That bars the traveller's road, she often stood,
 And when a stranger horseman came, the latch
 Would lift, and in his face look wistfully :
 Most happy, if, from aught discovered there
 Of tender feeling, she might dare repeat
 The same sad question. Meanwhile her poor Hut
 Sank to decay ; for he was gone, whose hand,
 At the first nipping of October frost,
 Closed up each chink, and with fresh bands of straw
 Chequered the green-grown thatch. And so she lived
 Through the long winter, reckless and alone ;
 Until her house by frost, and thaw, and rain,
 Was sapped ; and while she slept, the nightly damps
 Did chill her breast ; and in the stormy day
 Her tattered clothes were ruffled by the wind,
 Even at the side of her own fire. Yet still
 She loved this wretched spot, nor would for worlds
 Have parted hence ; and still that length of road,
 And this rude bench, one torturing hope endeared,
 Fast rooted at her heart : and here, my Friend,—
 In sickness she remained ; and here she died ;
 Last human tenant of these ruined walls !”

The old Man ceased : he saw that I was moved ;
 From that low bench, rising instinctively
 I turned aside in weakness, nor had power
 To thank him for the tale which he had told.
 I stood, and leaning o'er the garden wall
 Reviewed that Woman's sufferings ; and it seemed
 To comfort me while with a brother's love
 I blessed her in the impotence of grief.
 Then towards the cottage I returned ; and traced
 Fondly, though with an interest more mild,
 That secret spirit of humanity
 Which, 'mid the calm oblivious tendencies
 Of nature, 'mid her plants, and weeds, and flowers,

And silent overgrowings, still survived.
 The old Man, noting this, resumed, and said,
 “My Friend ! enough to sorrow you have given,
 The purposes of wisdom ask no more :
 Nor more would she have craved as due to One
 Who, in her worst distress, had oftentimes felt
 The unbounded might of prayer ; and learned, with
 soul
 Fixed on the Cross, that consolation springs,
 From sources deeper far than deepest pain,
 For the meek Sufferer. Why then should we read
 The forms of things with an unworthy eye ?
 She sleeps in the calm earth, and peace is here.
 I well remember that those very plumes,
 Those weeds, and the high spear-grass on that wall,
 By mist and silent rain-drops silvered o'er,
 As once I passed, into my heart conveyed
 So still an image of tranquillity,
 So calm and still, and looked so beautiful
 Amid the uneasy thoughts which filled my mind,
 That what we feel of sorrow and despair
 From ruin and from change, and all the grief
 That passing shows of Being leave behind,
 Appeared an idle dream, that could maintain,
 Nowhere, dominion o'er the enlightened spirit
 Whose meditative sympathies repose
 Upon the breast of Faith. I turned away,
 And walked along my road in happiness.”

He ceased. Ere long the sun declining shot
 A slant and mellow radiance, which began
 To fall upon us, while, beneath the trees,
 We sate on that low bench : and now we felt,
 Admonished thus, the sweet hour coming on.
 A linnet warbled from those lofty elms,
 A thrush sang loud, and other melodies,
 At distance heard, peopled the milder air.
 The old Man rose, and, with a sprightly mien
 Of hopeful preparation, grasped his staff ;
 Together casting then a farewell look
 Upon those silent walls, we left the shade ;
 And, ere the stars were visible, had reached
 A village-inn,—our evening resting-place.

BOOK SECOND.

THE SOLITARY.

ARGUMENT.

The Author describes his travels with the Wanderer, whose character is further illustrated—Morning scene, and view of a Village Wake—Wanderer's account of a Friend whom he purposes to visit—View, from an eminence, of the Valley which his Friend had chosen for his retreat—Sound of singing from below—a funeral procession—Descent into the Valley—Observations drawn from the Wanderer at sight of a book accidentally discovered in a recess in the Valley—Meeting with the Wanderer's friend, the Solitary—Wanderer's description of the mode of burial in this mountainous district—Solitary contrasts with this, that of the individual carried a few minutes before from the cottage—The cottage entered—Description of the Solitary's apartment—Repat there—View, from the window, of two mountain summits; and the Solitary's description of the companionship they afford him—Account of the departed inmate of the cottage—Description of a grand spectacle upon the mountains, with its effect upon the Solitary's mind—Leave the house.

In days of yore how fortunately fared
The Minstrel! wandering on from hall to hall,
Baronial court or royal; cheered with gifts
Munificent, and love, and ladies' praise;
Now meeting on his road an armed knight,
Now resting with a pilgrim by the side
Of a clear brook;—beneath an abbey's roof
One evening sumptuously lodged; the next,
Humbly in a religious hospital;
Or with some merry outlaws of the wood;
Or haply shrouded in a hermit's cell.
Him, sleeping or awake, the robber spared;
He walked—protected from the sword of war
By virtue of that sacred instrument
His harp, suspended at the traveller's side;
His dear companion wheresoe'er he went
Opening from land to land an easy way
By melody, and by the charm of verse.
Yet not the noblest of that honoured Race
Drew happier, loftier, more empassioned, thoughts
From his long journeyings and eventful life,
Than this obscure Itinerant had skill
To gather, ranging through the tamer ground
Of these our unimaginative days;
Both while he trod the earth in humblest guise
Accounted with his burthen and his staff;
And now, when free to move with lighter pace.

What wonder, then, if I, whose favourite school
Hath been the fields, the roads, and rural lanes,

Looked on this guide with reverential love?
Each with the other pleased, we now pursued
Our journey, under favourable skies.
Turn wheresoe'er we would, he was a light
Unfailing: not a hamlet could we pass,
Rarely a house, that did not yield to him
Remembrances; or from his tongue call forth
Some way-beguiling tale. Nor less regard
Accompanied those strains of apt discourse,
Which nature's various objects might inspire;
And in the silence of his face I read
His overflowing spirit. Birds and beasts,
And the mute fish that glances in the stream,
And harmless reptile coiling in the sun,
And gorgeous insect hovering in the air,
The fowl domestic, and the household dog—
In his capacious mind, he loved them all:
Their rights acknowledging he felt for all.
Oft was occasion given me to perceive
How the calm pleasures of the pasturing herd
To happy contemplation soothed his walk;
How the poor brute's condition, forced to run
Its course of suffering in the public road,
Sad contrast! all too often smote his heart
With unavailing pity. Rich in love
And sweet humanity, he was, himself,
To the degree that he desired, beloved.
Smiles of good-will from faces that he knew
Greeted us all day long; we took our seats
By many a cottage-hearth, where he received
The welcome of an Inmate from afar,
And I at once forgot, I was a Stranger.
—Nor was he loth to enter ragged huts,
Huts where his charity was blest; his voice
Heard as the voice of an experienced friend.
And, sometimes—where the poor man held dispute
With his own mind, unable to subdue
Impatience through inaptness to perceive
General distress in his particular lot;
Or cherishing resentment, or in vain
Struggling against it; with a soul perplexed,
And finding in herself no steady power
To draw the line of comfort that divides
Calamity, the chastisement of Heaven,
From the injustice of our brother men—
To him appeal was made as to a judge;
Who, with an understanding heart, allayed
The perturbation; listened to the plea;
Resolved the dubious point; and sentence gave

So grounded, so applied, that it was heard
With softened spirit, even when it condemned.

Such intercourse I witnessed, while we roved,
Now as his choice directed, now as mine ;
Or both, with equal readiness of will,
Our course submitting to the changeful breeze
Of accident. But when the rising sun
Had three times called us to renew our walk,
My Fellow-traveller, with earnest voice,
As if the thought were but a moment old,
Claimed absolute dominion for the day.
We started—and he led me toward the hills,
Up through an ample vale, with higher hills
Before us, mountains stern and desolate ;
But, in the majesty of distance, now
Set off, and to our ken appearing fair
Of aspect, with aerial softness clad,
And beautified with morning's purple beams.

The wealthy, the luxurious, by the stress
Of business roused, or pleasure, ere their time,
May roll in chariots, or provoke the hoofs
Of the fleet coursers they bestride, to raise
From earth the dust of morning, slow to rise ;
And they, if blest with health and hearts at ease,
Shall lack not their enjoyment :—but how faint
Compared with ours ! who, pacing side by side,
Could, with an eye of leisure, look on all
That we beheld ; and lend the listening sense
To every grateful sound of earth and air ;
Pausing at will—our spirits braced, our thoughts
Pleasant as roses in the thickets blown,
And pure as dew bathing their crimson leaves.

Mount slowly, sun ! that we may journey long,
By this dark hill protected from thy beams !
Such is the summer pilgrim's frequent wish ;
But quickly from among our morning thoughts
Twas chased away : for, toward the western side
Of the broad vale, casting a casual glance,
We saw a throng of people ;—wherefore met ?
Blithe notes of music, suddenly let loose
On the thrilled ear, and flags uprising, yield
Prompt answer ; they proclaim the annual Wake,
Which the bright season favours.—Tabor and pipe
In purpose join to hasten or reprove
The laggard Rustic ; and repay with boons
Of merriment a party-coloured knot,
Already formed upon the village-green.
—Beyond the limits of the shadow cast
By the broad hill, glistened upon our sight
That gay assemblage. Round them and above,
Glitter, with dark recesses interposed,

Casement, and cottage-roof, and stems of trees
Half-veiled in vapoury cloud, the silver steam
Of dews fast melting on their leafy boughs
By the strong sunbeams smitten. Like a mast
Of gold, the Maypole shines ; as if the rays
Of morning, aided by exhaling dew,
With gladsome influence could re-animate
The faded garlands dangling from its sides.

Said I, " The music and the sprightly scene
Invite us ; shall we quit our road, and join
These festive matins ?"—He replied, " Not loth
To linger I would here with you partake,
Not one hour merely, but till evening's close,
The simple pastimes of the day and place.
By the fleet Racers, ere the sun be set,
The turf of yon large pasture will be skimmed ;
There, too, the lusty Wrestlers shall contend :
But know we not that he, who intermits
The appointed task and duties of the day,
Untunes full oft the pleasures of the day ;
Checking the finer spirits that refuse
To flow, when purposes are lightly changed ?
A length of journey yet remains untraced :
Let us proceed." Then, pointing with his staff
Raised toward those craggy summits, his intent
He thus imparted :—

" In a spot that lies
Among yon mountain fastnesses concealed,
You will receive, before the hour of noon,
Good recompense, I hope, for this day's toil,
From sight of One who lives secluded there,
Lonesome and lost : of whom, and whose past life,
(Not to forestall such knowledge as may be
More faithfully collected from himself)
This brief communication shall suffice.

Though now sojourning there, he, like myself,
Sprang from a stock of lowly parentage
Among the wilds of Scotland, in a tract
Where many a sheltered and well-tended plant,
Bears, on the humblest ground of social life,
Blossoms of piety and innocence.
Such grateful promises his youth displayed :
And, having shown in study forward zeal,
He to the Ministry was duly called ;
And straight, incited by a curious mind
Filled with vague hopes, he undertook the charge
Of Chaplain to a military troop
Cheered by the Highland bagpipe, as they marched
In plaided vest,—his fellow-countrymen.
This office filling, yet by native power
And force of native inclination made
An intellectual ruler in the haunts

Of social vanity, he walked the world,
 Gay, and affecting graceful gaiety ;
 Lax, buoyant—less a pastor with his flock
 Than a soldier among soldiers—lived and roamed
 Where Fortune led :—and Fortune, who oft proves
 The careless wanderer's friend, to him made known
 A blooming Lady—a conspicuous flower,
 Admired for beauty, for her sweetness praised ;
 Whom he had sensibility to love,
 Ambition to attempt, and skill to win.

For this fair Bride, most rich in gifts of mind,
 Nor sparingly endowed with worldly wealth,
 His office he relinquished ; and retired
 From the world's notice to a rural home.
 Youth's season yet with him was scarcely past,
 And she was in youth's prime. How free their love,
 How full their joy ! 'Till, pitiable doom !
 In the short course of one undreaded year,
 Death blasted all. Death suddenly o'erthrew
 Two lovely Children—all that they possessed !
 The Mother followed :—miserably bare
 The one Survivor stood ; he wept, he prayed
 For his dismissal, day and night, compelled
 To hold communion with the grave, and face
 With pain the regions of eternity.
 An uncomplaining apathy displaced
 This anguish ; and, indifferent to delight,
 To aim and purpose, he consumed his days,
 To private interest dead, and public care.
 So lived he ; so he might have died.

But now,

To the wide world's astonishment, appeared
 A glorious opening, the unlooked-for dawn,
 That promised everlasting joy to France !
 Her voice of social transport reached even him !
 He broke from his contracted bounds, repaired
 To the great City, an emporium then
 Of golden expectations, and receiving
 Freights every day from a new world of hope.
 Thither his popular talents he transferred ;
 And, from the pulpit, zealously maintained
 The cause of Christ and civil liberty,
 As one, and moving to one glorious end.
 Intoxicating service ! I might say
 A happy service ; for he was sincere
 As vanity and fondness for applause,
 And new and shapeless wishes, would allow.

That righteous cause (such power hath freedom)
 bound,
 For one hostility, in friendly league,
 Ethereal natures and the worst of slaves ;
 Was served by rival advocates that came

From regions opposite as heaven and hell.
 One courage seemed to animate them all :
 And, from the dazzling conquests daily gained
 By their united efforts, there arose
 A proud and most presumptuous confidence
 In the transcendent wisdom of the age,
 And her discernment ; not alone in rights,
 And in the origin and bounds of power
 Social and temporal ; but in laws divine,
 Deduced by reason, or to faith revealed.
 An overweening trust was raised ; and fear
 Cast out, alike of person and of thing.
 Plague from this union spread, whose subtle bane
 The strongest did not easily escape ;
 And He, what wonder ! took a mortal taint.
 How shall I trace the change, how bear to tell
 That he broke faith with them whom he had laid
 In earth's dark chambers, with a Christian's hope !
 An infidel contempt of holy writ
 Stole by degrees upon his mind ; and hence
 Life, like that Roman Janus, double-faced ;
 Vilest hypocrisy—the laughing, gay
 Hypocrisy, not leagued with fear, but pride.
 Smooth words he had to wheedle simple souls ;
 But, for disciples of the inner school,
 Old freedom was old servitude, and they
 The wisest whose opinions stooped the least
 To known restraints ; and who most boldly drew
 Hopeful prognostications from a creed,
 That, in the light of false philosophy,
 Spread like a halo round a misty moon,
 Widening its circle as the storms advance.

His sacred function was at length renounced ;
 And every day and every place enjoyed
 The unshackled layman's natural liberty ;
 Speech, manners, morals, all without disguise.
 I do not wish to wrong him ; though the course
 Of private life licentiously displayed
 Unhallowed actions—planted like a crown
 Upon the insolent aspiring brow
 Of spurious notions—worn as open signs
 Of prejudice subdued—still he retained,
 'Mid much abasement, what he had received
 From nature, an intense and glowing mind.
 Wherefore, when humbled Liberty grew weak,
 And mortal sickness on her face appeared,
 He coloured objects to his own desire
 As with a lover's passion. Yet his moods
 Of pain were keen as those of better men,
 Nay keener, as his fortitude was less :
 And he continued, when worse days were come,
 To deal about his sparkling eloquence,
 Struggling against the strange reverse with zeal

That shewed like happiness. But, in despite
Of all this outside bravery, within,
He neither felt encouragement nor hope :
For moral dignity, and strength of mind,
Were wanting ; and simplicity of life ;
And reverence for himself ; and, last and best,
Confiding thoughts, through love and fear of Him
Before whose sight the troubles of this world
Are vain, as billows in a tossing sea.

The glory of the times fading away—
The splendor, which had given a festal air
To self-importance, hallowed it, and veiled
From his own sight—this gone, he forfeited
All joy in human nature ; was consumed,
And vexed, and chafed, by levity and scorn,
And fruitless indignation ; galled by pride ;
Made desperate by contempt of men who throve
Before his sight in power or fame, and won,
Without desert, what he desired ; weak men,
Too weak even for his envy or his hate !
Tormented thus, after a wandering course
Of discontent, and inwardly oppress
With malady—in part, I fear, provoked
By weariness of life—he fixed his home,
Or, rather say, sate down by very chance,
Among these rugged hills ; where now he dwells,
And wastes the sad remainder of his hours,
Steeped in a self-indulging spleen, that wants not
Its own voluptuousness ;—on this resolved,
With this content, that he will live and die
Forgotten,—at safe distance from ‘a world
Not moving to his mind.’”

These serious words

Closed the preparatory notices
That served my Fellow-traveller to beguile
The way, while we advanced up that wide vale.
Diverging now (as if his quest had been
Some secret of the mountains, cavern, fall
Of water, or some lofty eminence,
Renowned for splendid prospect far and wide)
We scaled, without a track to ease our steps,
A steep ascent ; and reached a dreary plain,
With a tumultuous waste of huge hill tops
Before us ; savage region ! which I paced
Dispirited : when, all at once, behold !
Beneath our feet, a little lowly vale,
A lowly vale, and yet uplifted high
Among the mountains ; even as if the spot
Had been from eldest time by wish of theirs
So placed, to be shut out from all the world !
Urn-like it was in shape, deep as an urn ;
With rocks encompassed, save that to the south
Was one small opening, where a heath-clad ridge

Supplied a boundary less abrupt and close ;
A quiet treeless nook, with two green fields,
A liquid pool that glittered in the sun,
And one bare dwelling ; one abode, no more !
It seemed the home of poverty and toil,
Though not of want : the little fields, made green
By husbandry of many thrifty years,
Paid cheerful tribute to the moorland house.
—There crows the cock, single in his domain :
The small birds find in spring no thicket there
To shroud them ; only from the neighbouring vales
The cuckoo, straggling up to the hill tops,
Shouteth faint tidings of some gladder place.

Ah ! what a sweet Recess, thought I, is here !
Instantly throwing down my limbs at ease
Upon a bed of heath ;—full many a spot
Of hidden beauty have I chanced to espy
Among the mountains ; never one like this ;
So lonesome, and so perfectly secure ;
Not melancholy—no, for it is green,
And bright, and fertile, furnished in itself
With the few needful things that life requires.
—In rugged arms how softly does it lie,
How tenderly protected ! Far and near
We have an image of the pristine earth,
The planet in its nakedness : were this
Man's only dwelling, sole appointed seat,
First, last, and single, in the breathing world,
It could not be more quiet : peace is here
Or nowhere ; days unruffled by the gale
Of public news or private ; years that pass
Forgetfully ; uncalled upon to pay
The common penalties of mortal life,
Sickness, or accident, or grief, or pain.

On these and kindred thoughts intent I lay
In silence musing by my Comrade's side,
He also silent ; when from out the heart
Of that profound abyss a solemn voice,
Or several voices in one solemn sound,
Was heard ascending ; mournful, deep, and slow
The cadence, as of psalms—a funeral dirge !
We listened, looking down upon the hut,
But seeing no one : meanwhile from below
The strain continued, spiritual as before ;
And now distinctly could I recognise
These words :—“*Shall in the grave thy love be known,
In death thy faithfulness ?*” —“God rest his soul !”
Said the old man, abruptly breaking silence,—
“He is departed, and finds peace at last !”

This scarcely spoken, and those holy strains
Not ceasing, forth appeared in view a band

Of rustic persons, from behind the hut
 Bearing a coffin in the midst, with which
 They shaped their course along the sloping side
 Of that small valley, singing as they moved ;
 A sober company and few, the men
 Bare-headed, and all decently attired !
 Some steps when they had thus advanced, the
 dirge

Ended ; and, from the stillness that ensued
 Recovering, to my Friend I said, " You spake,
 Methought, with apprehension that these rites
 Are paid to Him upon whose shy retreat
 This day we purposed to intrude."—" I did so,
 But let us hence, that we may learn the truth :
 Perhaps it is not he but some one else
 For whom this pious service is performed ;
 Some other tenant of the solitude."

So, to a steep and difficult descent
 Trusting ourselves, we wound from crag to crag,
 Where passage could be won ; and, as the last
 Of the mute train, behind the heathy top
 Of that off-sloping outlet, disappeared,
 I, more impatient in my downward course,
 Had landed upon easy ground ; and there
 Stood waiting for my Comrade. When behold
 An object that enticed my steps aside !
 A narrow, winding, entry opened out
 Into a platform—that lay, sheepfold-wise,
 Enclosed between an upright mass of rock
 And one old moss-grown wall ;—a cool recess,
 And fanciful ! For where the rock and wall
 Met in an angle, hung a penthouse, framed
 By thrusting two rude staves into the wall
 And overlaying them with mountain sods ;
 To weather-fend a little turf-built seat
 Whereon a full-grown man might rest, nor dread
 The burning sunshine, or a transient shower ;
 But the whole plainly wrought by children's hands !
 Whose skill had thronged the floor with a proud
 show

Of baby-houses, curiously arranged ;
 Nor wanting ornament of walks between,
 With mimic trees inserted in the turf,
 And gardens interposed. Pleased with the sight,
 I could not choose but beckon to my Guide,
 Who, entering, round him threw a careless glance,
 Impatient to pass on, when I exclaimed,
 " Lo ! what is here ?" and, stooping down, drew
 forth

A book, that, in the midst of stones and moss
 And wreck of party-coloured earthen-ware,
 Aptly disposed, had lent its help to raise
 One of those petty structures. " His it must be !"

Exclaimed the Wanderer, " cannot but be his,
 And he is gone !" The book, which in my hand
 Had opened of itself (for it was swoln
 With searching damp, and seemingly had lain
 To the injurious elements exposed
 From week to week,) I found to be a work
 In the French tongue, a Novel of Voltaire,
 His famous Optimist. " Unhappy Man !"
 Exclaimed my Friend : " here then has been to him
 Retreat within retreat, a sheltering-place
 Within how deep a shelter ! He had fits,
 Even to the last, of genuine tenderness,
 And loved the haunts of children : here, no doubt,
 Pleasing and pleased, he shared their simple sports,
 Or sate companionless ; and here the book,
 Left and forgotten in his careless way,
 Must by the cottage-children have been found :
 Heaven bless them, and their inconsiderate work !
 To what odd purpose have the darlings turned
 This sad memorial of their hapless friend !"

" Me," said I, " most doth it surprise, to find
 Such book in such a place !"—" A book it is,"
 He answered, " to the Person suited well,
 Though little suited to surrounding things :
 'Tis strange, I grant ; and stranger still had been
 To see the Man who owned it, dwelling here,
 With one poor shepherd, far from all the world !—
 Now, if our errand hath been thrown away,
 As from these intimations I forebode,
 Grieved shall I be—less for my sake than yours,
 And least of all for him who is no more."

By this, the book was in the old Man's hand ;
 And he continued, glancing on the leaves
 An eye of scorn :—" The lover," said he, " doomed
 To love when hope hath failed him—whom no
 depth

Of privacy is deep enough to hide,
 Hath yet his bracelet or his lock of hair,
 And that is joy to him. When change of times
 Hath summoned kings to scaffolds, do but give
 The faithful servant, who must hide his head
 Henceforth in whatsoever nook he may
 A kerchief sprinkled with his master's blood,
 And he too hath his comforter. How poor,
 Beyond all poverty how destitute,
 Must that Man have been left, who, hither driven,
 Flying or seeking, could yet bring with him
 No dearer relique, and no better stay,
 Than this dull product of a scoffer's pen,
 Impure conceits discharging from a heart
 Hardened by impious pride !—I did not fear
 To tax you with this journey ;"—mildly said

My venerable Friend, as forth we stepped
 Into the presence of the cheerful light—
 "For I have knowledge that you do not shrink
 From moving spectacles;—but let us on."

So speaking, on he went, and at the word
 I followed, till he made a sudden stand:
 For full in view, approaching through a gate
 That opened from the enclosure of green fields
 Into the rough uncultivated ground,
 Behold the Man whom he had fancied dead!
 I knew from his deportment, mien, and dress,
 That it could be no other; a pale face,
 A meagre person, tall, and in a garb
 Not rustic—dull and faded like himself!
 He saw us not, though distant but few steps;
 For he was busy, dealing, from a store
 Upon a broad leaf carried, choicest strings
 Of red ripe currants; gift by which he strove,
 With intermixture of endearing words,
 To soothe a Child, who walked beside him, weeping
 As if disconsolate.—"They to the grave
 Are bearing him, my Little one," he said,
 "To the dark pit; but he will feel no pain;
 His body is at rest, his soul in heaven."

More might have followed—but my honoured
 Friend

Broke in upon the Speaker with a frank
 And cordial greeting.—Vivid was the light
 That flashed and sparkled from the other's eyes;
 He was all fire: no shadow on his brow
 Remained, nor sign of sickness on his face.
 Hands joined he with his Visitant,—a grasp,
 An eager grasp; and many moments' space—
 When the first glow of pleasure was no more,
 And, of the sad appearance which at once
 Had vanished, much was come and coming back—
 An amicable smile retained the life
 Which it had unexpectedly received,
 Upon his hollow cheek. "How kind," he said,
 "Nor could your coming have been better timed;
 For this, you see, is in our narrow world
 A day of sorrow. - I have here a charge"—
 And, speaking thus, he patted tenderly
 The sun-burnt forehead of the weeping child—
 "A little mourner, whom it is my task
 To comfort;—but how came ye?—if yon track
 (Which doth at once befriend us and betray)
 Conducted hither your most welcome feet,
 Ye could not miss the funeral train—they yet
 Have scarcely disappeared." "This blooming
 Child,"

Said the old Man, "is of an age to weep

At any grave or solemn spectacle,
 Inly distressed or overpowered with awe,
 He knows not wherefore;—but the boy to-day,
 Perhaps is shedding orphan's tears; you also
 Must have sustained a loss."—"The hand of Death,"
 He answered, "has been here; but could not well
 Have fallen more lightly, if it had not fallen
 Upon myself."—The other left these words
 Unnoticed, thus continuing.—

"From yon crag,
 Down whose steep sides we dropped into the vale,
 We heard the hymn they sang—a solemn sound
 Heard any where; but in a place like this
 'Tis more than human! Many precious rites
 And customs of our rural ancestry
 Are gone, or stealing from us; this, I hope,
 Will last for ever. Oft on my way have I
 Stood still, though but a casual passenger,
 So much I felt the awfulness of life,
 In that one moment when the corse is lifted
 In silence, with a hush of decency;
 Then from the threshold moves with song of peace,
 And confidential yearnings, tow'ards its home,
 Its final home on earth. What traveller—who—
 (How far soe'er a stranger) does not own
 The bond of brotherhood, when he sees them go,
 A mute procession on the houseless road;
 Or passing by some single tenement
 Or clustered dwellings, where again they raise
 The monitory voice? But most of all
 It touches, it confirms, and elevates,
 Then, when the body, soon to be consigned
 Ashes to ashes, dust bequeathed to dust,
 Is raised from the church-aisle, and forward borne
 Upon the shoulders of the next in love,
 The nearest in affection or in blood;
 Yea, by the very mourners who had knelt
 Beside the coffin, resting on its lid
 In silent grief their unlifted heads,
 And heard meanwhile the Psalmist's mournful
 plaint,
 And that most awful scripture which declares
 We shall not sleep, but we shall all be changed!
 —Have I not seen—ye likewise may have seen—
 Son, husband, brothers—brothers side by side,
 And son and father also side by side,
 Rise from that posture:—and in concert move,
 On the green turf following the vested Priest,
 Four dear supporters of one senseless weight,
 From which they do not shrink, and under which
 They faint not, but advance towards the open grave
 Step after step—together, with their firm
 Unhidden faces: he that suffers most,
 He outwardly, and inwardly perhaps,

The most serene, with most undaunted eye !—
Oh ! blest are they who live and die like these,
Loved with such love, and with such sorrow
mourned !”

“That poor Man taken hence to-day,” replied
The Solitary, with a faint sarcastic smile
Which did not please me, “must be deemed, I fear,
Of the unblest ; for he will surely sink
Into his mother earth without such pomp
Of grief, depart without occasion given
By him for such array of fortitude.
Full seventy winters hath he lived, and mark !
This simple Child will mourn his one short hour,
And I shall miss him ; scanty tribute ! yet,
This wanting, he would leave the sight of men,
If love were his sole claim upon their care,
Like a ripe date which in the desert falls
Without a hand to gather it.”

At this
I interposed, though loth to speak, and said,
“Can it be thus among so small a band
As ye must needs be here ? in such a place
I would not willingly, methinks, lose sight
Of a departing cloud.”—“’Twas not for love”
Answered the sick Man with a careless voice—
“That I came hither ; neither have I found
Among associates who have power of speech,
Nor in such other converse as is here,
Temptation so prevailing as to change
That mood, or undermine my first resolve.”
Then, speaking in like careless sort, he said
To my benign Companion,—“Pity ’tis
That fortune did not guide you to this house
A few days earlier ; then would you have seen
What stuff the Dwellers in a solitude,
That seems by Nature hollowed out to be
The seat and bosom of pure innocence,
Are made of ; an ungracious matter this !
Which, for truth’s sake, yet in remembrance too
Of past discussions with this zealous friend
And advocate of humble life, I now
Will force upon his notice ; undeterred
By the example of his own pure course,
And that respect and deference which a soul
May fairly claim, by niggard age enriched
In what she most doth value, love of God
And his frail creature Man ;—but ye shall hear.
I talk—and ye are standing in the sun
Without refreshment !”

Quickly had he spoken,
And, with light steps still quicker than his words,
Led toward the Cottage. Homely was the spot ;
And, to my feeling, ere we reached the door,

Had almost a forbidding nakedness ;
Less fair, I grant, even painfully less fair,
Than it appeared when from the beetling rock
We had looked down upon it. All within,
As left by the departed company,
Was silent ; save the solitary clock
That on mine ear ticked with a mournful sound.—
Following our Guide, we clomb the cottage-stairs
And reached a small apartment dark and low,
Which was no sooner entered than our Host
Said gaily, “This is my domain, my cell,
My hermitage, my cabin, what you will—
I love it better than a snail his house.
But now ye shall be feasted with our best.”

So, with more ardour than an unripe girl
Left one day mistress of her mother’s stores,
He went about his hospitable task.
My eyes were busy, and my thoughts no less,
And pleased I looked upon my grey-haired Friend,
As if to thank him ; he returned that look,
Cheered, plainly, and yet serious. What a wreck
Had we about us ! scattered was the floor,
And, in like sort, chair, window-seat, and shelf,
With books, maps, fossils, withered plants and
flowers,
And tufts of mountain moss. Mechanic tools
Lay intermixed with scraps of paper, some
Scribbled with verse : a broken angling-rod
And shattered telescope, together linked
By cobwebs, stood within a dusty nook ;
And instruments of music, some half-made,
Some in disgrace, hung dangling from the walls.
But speedily the promise was fulfilled ;
A feast before us, and a courteous Host
Inviting us in glee to sit and eat.
A napkin, white as foam of that rough brook
By which it had been bleached, o’erspread the
board ;
And was itself half-covered with a store
Of dainties,—oaten bread, curd, cheese, and cream ;
And cakes of butter curiously embossed,
Butter that had imbibed from meadow-flowers
A golden hue, delicate as their own
Faintly reflected in a lingering stream.
Nor lacked, for more delight on that warm day,
Our table, small parade of garden fruits,
And whortle-berries from the mountain side.
The Child, who long ere this had stilled his sobs,
Was now a help to his late comforter,
And moved, a willing Page, as he was bid,
Ministering to our need.

In genial mood,
While at our pastoral banquet thus we sate

Fronting the window of that little cell,
 I could not, ever and anon, forbear
 To glance an upward look on two huge Peaks,
 That from some other vale peered into this.
 "Those lusty twins," exclaimed our host, "if here
 It were your lot to dwell, would soon become
 Your prized companions.—Many are the notes
 Which, in his tuneful course, the wind draws forth
 From rocks, woods, caverns, heaths, and dashing
 shores ;

And well those lofty brethren bear their part
 In the wild concert—chiefly when the storm
 Rides high ; then all the upper air they fill
 With roaring sound, that ceases not to flow,
 Like smoke, along the level of the blast,
 In mighty current ; theirs, too, is the song
 Of stream and headlong flood that seldom fails ;
 And, in the grim and breathless hour of noon,
 Methinks that I have heard them echo back
 The thunder's greeting. Nor have nature's laws
 Left them ungifted with a power to yield
 Music of finer tone ; a harmony,
 So do I call it, though it be the hand
 Of silence, though there be no voice ;—the clouds,
 The mist, the shadows, light of golden suns,
 Motions of moonlight, all come thither—touch,
 And have an answer—thither come, and shape
 A language not unwelcome to sick hearts
 And idle spirits :—there the sun himself,
 At the calm close of summer's longest day,
 Rests his substantial orb ;—between those heights
 And on the top of either pinnacle,
 More keenly than elsewhere in night's blue vault,
 Sparkle the stars, as of their station proud.
 Thoughts are not busier in the mind of man
 Than the mute agents stirring there :—alone
 Here do I sit and watch.—"

A fall of voice,
 Regretted like the nightingale's last note,
 Had scarcely closed this high-wrought strain of
 rapture

Ere with inviting smile the Wanderer said :
 "Now for the tale with which you threatened us !"
 "In truth the threat escaped me unawares :
 Should the tale tire you, let this challenge stand
 For my excuse. Dissevered from mankind,
 As to your eyes and thoughts we must have seemed
 When ye looked down upon us from the crag,
 Islanders mid a stormy mountain sea,
 We are not so ;—perpetually we touch
 Upon the vulgar ordinances of the world ;
 And he, whom this our cottage hath to-day
 Relinquished, lived dependent for his bread
 Upon the laws of public charity.

The Housewife, tempted by such slender gains
 As might from that occasion be distilled,
 Opened, as she before had done for me,
 Her doors to admit this homeless Pensioner ;
 The portion gave of coarse but wholesome fare
 Which appetite required—a blind dull nook,
 Such as she had, the *kennel* of his rest !
 This, in itself not ill, would yet have been
 Ill borne in earlier life ; but his was now
 The still contentedness of seventy years.
 Calm did he sit under the wide-spread tree
 Of his old age ; and yet less calm and meek,
 Winningly meek or venerably calm,
 Than slow and torpid ; paying in this wise
 A penalty, if penalty it were,
 For spendthrift feats, excesses of his prime.
 I loved the old Man, for I pitied him !
 A task it was, I own, to hold discourse
 With one so slow in gathering up his thoughts,
 But he was a cheap pleasure to my eyes ;
 Mild, inoffensive, ready in *his* way,
 And helpful to his utmost power : and there
 Our housewife knew full well what she possessed !
 He was her vassal of all labour, tilled
 Her garden, from the pasture fetched her kine ;
 And, one among the orderly array
 Of hay-makers, beneath the burning sun
 Maintained his place ; or heedfully pursued
 His course, on errands bound, to other vales,
 Leading sometimes an inexperienced child
 Too young for any profitable task.
 So moved he like a shadow that performed
 Substantial service. Mark me now, and learn
 For what reward !—The moon her monthly round
 Hath not completed since our dame, the queen
 Of this one cottage and this lonely dale,
 Into my little sanctuary rushed—
 Voice to a rueful treble humanized,
 And features in deplorable dismay.
 I treat the matter lightly, but, alas !
 It is most serious : persevering rain
 Had fallen in torrents ; all the mountain tops
 Were hidden, and black vapours coursed their sides ;
 This had I seen, and saw ; but, till she spake,
 Was wholly ignorant that my ancient Friend—
 Who at her bidding, early and alone,
 Had clomb aloft to delve the moorland turf
 For winter fuel—to his noontide meal
 Returned not, and now, haply, on the heights
 Lay at the mercy of this raging storm.
 'Inhuman !'—said I, 'was an old Man's life
 Not worth the trouble of a thought ?—alas !
 This notice comes too late.' With joy I saw
 Her husband enter—from a distant vale.

We sallied forth together ; found the tools
Which the neglected veteran had dropped,
But through all quarters looked for him in vain.
We shouted—but no answer ! Darkness fell
Without remission of the blast or shower,
And fears for our own safety drove us home.

I, who weep little, did, I will confess,
The moment I was seated here alone,
Honour my little cell with some few tears
Which anger and resentment could not dry.
All night the storm endured ; and, soon as help
Had been collected from the neighbouring vale,
With morning we renewed our quest : the wind
Was fallen, the rain abated, but the hills
Lay shrouded in impenetrable mist ;
And long and hopelessly we sought in vain :
'Till, chancing on that lofty ridge to pass
A heap of ruin—almost without walls
And wholly without roof (the bleached remains
Of a small chapel, where, in ancient time,
The peasants of these lonely valleys used
To meet for worship on that central height)—
We there espied the object of our search,
Lying full three parts buried among tufts
Of heath-plant, under and above him strewn,
To baffle, as he might, the watery storm :
And there we found him breathing peaceably,
Snug as a child that hides itself in sport
'Mid a green hay-cock in a sunny field.
We spake—he made reply, but would not stir
At our entreaty ; less from want of power
Than apprehension and bewildering thoughts.

So was he lifted gently from the ground,
And with their freight homeward the shepherds
moved
Through the dull mist, I following—when a step,
A single step, that freed me from the skirts
Of the blind vapour, opened to my view
Glory beyond all glory ever seen
By waking sense or by the dreaming soul !
The appearance, instantaneously disclosed,
Was of a mighty city—boldly say
A wilderness of building, sinking far
And self-withdrawn into a boundless depth,
Far sinking into splendor—without end !
Fabric it seemed of diamond and of gold,
With alabaster domes, and silver spires,
And blazing terrace upon terrace, high
Uplifted ; here, serene pavilions bright,
In avenues disposed ; there, towers begirt
With battlements that on their restless fronts
Bore stars—illumination of all gems !

By earthly nature had the effect been wrought
Upon the dark materials of the storm
Now pacified ; on them, and on the coves
And mountain-steeps and summits, whereunto
The vapours had receded, taking there
Their station under a cerulean sky.
Oh, 'twas an unimaginable sight !
Clouds, mists, streams, watery rocks and emerald
turf,

Clouds of all tincture, rocks and sapphire sky,
Confused, commingled, mutually inflamed,
Molten together, and composing thus,
Each lost in each, that marvellous array
Of temple, palace, citadel, and huge
Fantastic pomp of structure without name,
In fleecy folds voluminous, enwrapped.
Right in the midst, where interspace appeared
Of open court, an object like a throne
Under a shining canopy of state
Stood fixed ; and fixed resemblances were seen
To implements of ordinary use,
But vast in size, in substance glorified ;
Such as by Hebrew Prophets were beheld
In vision—forms uncouth of mightiest power
For admiration and mysterious awe.
This little Vale, a dwelling-place of Man,
Lay low beneath my feet ; 'twas visible—
I saw not, but I felt that it was there.
That which I *saw* was the revealed abode
Of Spirits in beatitude : my heart
Swelled in my breast.—'I have been dead,' I
cried,

'And now I live ! Oh ! wherefore *do* I live ?'
And with that pang I prayed to be no more !—
—But I forget our Charge, as utterly
I then forgot him :—there I stood and gazed :
The apparition faded not away,
And I descended.

Having reached the house,
I found its rescued inmate safely lodged,
And in serene possession of himself,
Beside a fire whose genial warmth seemed met
By a faint shining from the heart, a gleam
Of comfort, spread over his pallid face.
Great show of joy the housewife made, and truly
Was glad to find her conscience set at ease ;
And not less glad, for sake of her good name,
That the poor Sufferer had escaped with life.
But, though he seemed at first to have received
No harm, and uncomplaining as before
Went through his usual tasks, a silent change
Soon showed itself : he lingered three short
weeks ;
And from the cottage hath been borne to-day.

So ends my dolorous tale, and glad I am
That it is ended." At these words he turned—
And, with blithe air of open fellowship,
Brought from the cupboard wine and stouter cheer,
Like one who would be merry. Seeing this,

My grey-haired Friend said courteously—"Nay,
nay,
You have regaled us as a hermit ought;
Now let us forth into the sun!"—Our Host
Rose, though reluctantly, and forth we went.

BOOK THIRD.

DESPONDENCY.

ARGUMENT.

Images in the Valley.—Another Recess in it entered and described.—Wanderer's sensations.—Solitary's excited by the same objects.—Contrast between these.—Despondency of the Solitary gently reproved.—Conversation exhibiting the Solitary's past and present opinions and feelings, till he enters upon his own History at length.—His domestic felicity—Afflictions.—Dejection.—Roused by the French Revolution.—Disappointment and disgust.—Voyage to America.—Disappointment and disgust pursue him.—His return.—His languor and depression of mind, from want of faith in the great truths of Religion, and want of confidence in the virtue of Mankind.

A HUMMING BEE—a little tinkling rill—
A pair of falcons wheeling on the wing,
In clamorous agitation, round the crest
Of a tall rock, their airy citadel—
By each and all of these the pensive ear
Was greeted, in the silence that ensued,
When through the cottage-threshold we had passed,
And, deep within that lonesome valley, stood
Once more beneath the concave of a blue
And cloudless sky.—Anon exclaimed our Host,
Triumphantly dispersing with the taunt
The shade of discontent which on his brow
Had gathered,—“Ye have left my cell,—but see
How Nature hems you in with friendly arms!
And by her help ye are my prisoners still.
But which way shall I lead you?—how contrive,
In spot so parsimoniously endowed,
That the brief hours, which yet remain, may reap
Some recompense of knowledge or delight?”
So saying, round he looked, as if perplexed;
And, to remove those doubts, my grey-haired
Friend

Said—“Shall we take this pathway for our guide?—
Upward it winds, as if, in summer heats,
Its line had first been fashioned by the flock
Seeking a place of refuge at the root
Of yon black Yew-tree, whose protruded boughs
Darken the silver bosom of the crag,

From which she draws her meagre sustenance.
There in commodious shelter may we rest.
Or let us trace this streamlet to its source;
Feebly it tinkles with an earthy sound,
And a few steps may bring us to the spot [herbs,
Where, haply, crowned with flowerets and green
The mountain infant to the sun comes forth,
Like human life from darkness.”—A quick turn
Through a strait passage of encumbered ground,
Proved that such hope was vain:—for now we stood
Shut out from prospect of the open vale,
And saw the water, that composed this rill,
Descending, disembodied, and diffused
O'er the smooth surface of an ample crag,
Lofty, and steep, and naked as a tower.
All further progress here was barred;—And who,
Thought I, if master of a vacant hour,
Here would not linger, willingly detained?
Whether to such wild objects he were led
When copious rains have magnified the stream
Into a loud and white-robed waterfall,
Or introduced at this more quiet time.

Upon a semicirque of turf-clad ground,
The hidden nook discovered to our view
A mass of rock, resembling, as it lay
Right at the foot of that moist precipice,
A stranded ship, with keel upturned, that rests
Fearless of winds and waves. Three several stones
Stood near, of smaller size, and not unlike
To monumental pillars: and, from these
Some little space disjoined, a pair were seen,
That with united shoulders bore aloft
A fragment, like an altar, flat and smooth:
Barren the tablet, yet thereon appeared
A tall and shining holly, that had found
A hospitable chink, and stood upright,
As if inserted by some human hand
In mockery, to wither in the sun,
Or lay its beauty flat before a breeze,
The first that entered. But no breeze did now
Find entrance;—high or low appeared no trace

Of motion, save the water that descended,
Diffused adown that barrier of steep rock,
And softly creeping, like a breath of air,
Such as is sometimes seen, and hardly seen,
To brush the still breast of a crystal lake.

"Behold a cabinet for sages built,
Which kings might envy!"—Praise to this effect
Broke from the happy old Man's reverend lip;
Who to the Solitary turned, and said,
"In sooth, with love's familiar privilege,
You have decried the wealth which is your own.
Among these rocks and stones, methinks, I see
More than the heedless impress that belongs
To lonely nature's casual work: they bear
A semblance strange of power intelligent,
And of design not wholly worn away.
Boldest of plants that ever faced the wind,
How gracefully that slender shrub looks forth
From its fantastic birth-place! And I own,
Some shadowy intimations haunt me here,
That in these shows a chronicle survives
Of purposes akin to those of Man,
But wrought with mightier arm than now prevails.
—Voiceless the stream descends into the gulf
With timid lapse;—and lo! while in this strait
I stand—the chasm of sky above my head
Is heaven's profoundest azure; no domain
For fickle, short-lived clouds to occupy,
Or to pass through; but rather an abyss
In which the everlasting stars abide;
And whose soft gloom, and boundless depth, might
tempt

The curious eye to look for them by day.
—Hail Contemplation! from the stately towers,
Reared by the industrious hand of human art
To lift thee high above the misty air
And turbulence of murmuring cities vast;
From academic groves, that have for thee
Been planted, hither come and find a lodge
To which thou mayst resort for holier peace,—
From whose calm centre thou, through height or
depth,
Mayst penetrate, wherever truth shall lead;
Measuring through all degrees, until the scale
Of time and conscious nature disappear,
Lost in unsearchable eternity!"

A pause ensued; and with minuter care
We scanned the various features of the scene:
And soon the Tenant of that lonely vale
With courteous voice thus spake—

"I should have grieved
Hereafter, not escaping self-reproach,

If from my poor retirement ye had gone
Leaving this nook unvisited: but, in sooth,
Your unexpected presence had so roused
My spirits, that they were bent on enterprise;
And, like an ardent hunter, I forgot,
Or, shall I say?—disdained, the game that lurks
At my own door. The shapes before our eyes
And their arrangement, doubtless must be deemed
The sport of Nature, aided by blind Chance
Rudely to mock the works of toiling Man.
And hence, this upright shaft of unhewn stone,
From Fancy, willing to set off her stores
By sounding titles, hath acquired the name
Of Pompey's pillar; that I gravely style
My Theban obelisk; and, there, behold
A Druid cromlech!—thus I entertain
The antiquarian humour, and am pleased
To skim along the surfaces of things,
Beguiling harmlessly the listless hours.
But if the spirit be oppressed by sense
Of instability, revolt, decay,
And change, and emptiness, these freaks of Nature
And her blind helper Chance, do *then* suffice
To quicken, and to aggravate—to feed
Pity and scorn, and melancholy pride,
Not less than that huge Pile (from some abyss
Of mortal power unquestionably sprung)
Whose hoary diadem of pendent rocks
Confines the shrill-voiced whirlwind, round and
round

Eddying within its vast circumference,
On Sarum's naked plain—than pyramid
Of Egypt, unsubverted, undissolved—
Or Syria's marble ruins towering high
Above the sandy desert, in the light
Of sun or moon.—Forgive me, if I say
That an appearance which hath raised your minds
To an exalted pitch (the self-same cause
Different effect producing) is for me
Fraught rather with depression than delight,
Though shame it were, could I not look around,
By the reflection of your pleasure, pleased.
Yet happier in my judgment, even than you
With your bright transports fairly may be deemed,
The wandering Herbalist,—who, clear alike
From vain, and, that worse evil, vexing thoughts,
Casts, if he ever chance to enter here,
Upon these uncouth Forms a slight regard
Of transitory interest, and peeps round
For some rare floweret of the hills, or plant
Of craggy fountain; what he hopes for wins,
Or learns, at least, that 'tis not to be won:
Then, keen and eager, as a fine-nosed hound
By soul-engrossing instinct driven along

Through wood or open field, the harmless Man
Departs, intent upon his onward quest !—
Nor is that Fellow-wanderer, so deem I,
Less to be envied, (you may trace him oft
By scars which his activity has left
Beside our roads and pathways, though, thank
Heaven !

This covert nook reports not of his hand)
He who with pocket-hammer smites the edge
Of luckless rock or prominent stone, disguised
In weather-stains or crusted o'er by Nature
With her first growths, detaching by the stroke
A chip or splinter—to resolve his doubts ;
And, with that ready answer satisfied,
The substance classes by some barbarous name,
And hurries on ; or from the fragments picks
His specimen, if but haply interveined
With sparkling mineral, or should crystal cube
Lurk in its cells—and thinks himself enriched,
Wealthier, and doubtless wiser, than before !
Intrusted safely each to his pursuit,
Earnest alike, let both from hill to hill
Range ; if it please them, speed from clime to clime ;
The mind is full—and free from pain their pastime.”

“Then,” said I, interposing, “One is near,
Who cannot but possess in your esteem
Place worthier still of envy. May I name,
Without offence, that fair-faced cottage-boy ?
Dame Nature’s pupil of the lowest form,
Youngest apprentice in the school of art !
Him, as we entered from the open glen,
You might have noticed, busily engaged,
Heart, soul, and hands,—in mending the defects
Left in the fabric of a leaky dam
Raised for enabling this penurious stream
To turn a slender mill (that new-made plaything)
For his delight—the happiest he of all !”

“Far happiest,” answered the desponding Man,
“If, such as now he is, he might remain !
Ah ! what avails imagination high
Or question deep ? what profits all that earth,
Or heaven’s blue vault, is suffered to put forth
Of impulse or allurements, for the Soul
To quit the beaten track of life, and soar
Far as she finds a yielding element
In past or future ; far as she can go
Through time or space—if neither in the one,
Nor in the other region, nor in aught
That Fancy, dreaming o’er the map of things,
Hath placed beyond these penetrable bounds,
Words of assurance can be heard ; if nowhere
A habitation, for consummate good,

Or for progressive virtue, by the search
Can be attained,—a better sanctuary
From doubt and sorrow, than the senseless grave ?”

“Is this,” the grey-haired Wanderer mildly said,
“The voice, which we so lately overheard,
To that same child, addressing tenderly
The consolations of a hopeful mind ?
‘His body is at rest, his soul in heaven.’
These were your words ; and, verily, methinks
Wisdom is oft-times nearer when we stoop
Than when we soar.”—

The Other, not displeased,
Promptly replied—“My notion is the same.
And I, without reluctance, could decline
All act of inquisition whence we rise,
And what, when breath hath ceased, we may be-
come.

Here are we, in a bright and breathing world.
Our origin, what matters it ? In lack
Of worthier explanation, say at once
With the American (a thought which suits
The place where now we stand) that certain men
Leapt out together from a rocky cave ;
And these were the first parents of mankind :
Or, if a different image be recalled
By the warm sunshine, and the jocund voice
Of insects chirping out their careless lives
On these soft beds of thyme-besprinkled turf,
Choose, with the gay Athenian, a conceit
As sound—blithe race ! whose mantles were be-
decked

With golden grasshoppers, in sign that they
Had sprung, like those bright creatures, from the
soil

Whereon their endless generations dwelt.
But stop !—these theoretic fancies jar
On serious minds : then, as the Hindoos draw
Their holy Ganges from a skiey fount,
Even so deduce the stream of human life
From seats of power divine ; and hope, or trust,
That our existence winds her stately course
Beneath the sun, like Ganges, to make part
Of a living ocean ; or, to sink engulfed,
Like Niger, in impenetrable sands
And utter darkness : thought which may be faced,
Though comfortless !—

Not of myself I speak ;
Such acquiescence neither doth imply,
In me, a meekly-bending spirit soothed
By natural piety ; nor a lofty mind,
By philosophic discipline prepared
For calm subjection to acknowledged law ;
Pleased to have been, contented not to be.

Such palms I boast not ;—no ! to me, who find,
 Reviewing my past way, much to condemn,
 Little to praise, and nothing to regret,
 (Save some remembrances of dream-like joys
 That scarcely seem to have belonged to me)
 If I must take my choice between the pair
 That rule alternately the weary hours,
 Night is than day more acceptable ; sleep
 Doth, in my estimate of good, appear
 A better state than waking ; death than sleep :
 Feelingly sweet is stillness after storm,
 Though under covert of the wormy ground !

Yet be it said, in justice to myself,
 That in more genial times, when I was free
 To explore the destiny of human kind
 (Not as an intellectual game pursued
 With curious subtilty, from wish to cheat
 Irsome sensations ; but by love of truth
 Urged on, or haply by intense delight
 In feeding thought, wherever thought could feed)
 I did not rank with those (too dull or nice,
 For to my judgment such they then appeared,
 Or too aspiring, thankless at the best)
 Who, in this frame of human life, perceive
 An object whereunto their souls are tied
 In discontented wedlock ; nor did e'er,
 From me, those dark impervious shades, that hang
 Upon the region whither we are bound,
 Exclude a power to enjoy the vital beams
 Of present sunshine.—Deities that float
 On wings, angelic Spirits ! I could muse
 O'er what from eldest time we have been told
 Of your bright forms and glorious faculties,
 And with the imagination rest content,
 Not wishing more ; repining not to tread
 The little sinuous path of earthly care,
 By flowers embellished, and by springs refreshed.
 —“ Blow winds of autumn !—let your chilling breath
 ‘ Take the live herbage from the mead, and strip
 ‘ The shady forest of its green attire,—
 ‘ And let the bursting clouds to fury rouse
 ‘ The gentle brooks !—Your desolating sway,
 ‘ Sheds,’ I exclaimed, ‘ no sadness upon me,
 ‘ And no disorder in your rage I find.
 ‘ What dignity, what beauty, in this change
 ‘ From mild to angry, and from sad to gay,
 ‘ Alternate and revolving ! How benign,
 ‘ How rich in animation and delight,
 ‘ How bountiful these elements—compared
 ‘ With aught, as more desirable and fair,
 ‘ Devised by fancy for the golden age ;
 ‘ Or the perpetual warbling that prevails
 ‘ In Arcady, beneath unaltered skies,

‘ Through the long year in constant quiet bound,
 ‘ Night hushed as night, and day serene as day !’
 —But why this tedious record !—Age, we know,
 Is garrulous ; and solitude is apt
 To anticipate the privilege of Age.
 From far ye come ; and surely with a hope
 Of better entertainment :—let us hence ! ”

Loth to forsake the spot, and still more loth
 To be diverted from our present theme,
 I said, “ My thoughts, agreeing, Sir, with yours,
 Would push this censure farther ;—for, if smiles
 Of scornful pity be the just reward
 Of Poesy thus courteously employed
 In framing models to improve the scheme
 Of Man’s existence, and recast the world,
 Why should not grave Philosophy be styled,
 Herself, a dreamer of a kindred stock,
 A dreamer yet more spiritless and dull ?
 Yes, shall the fine immunities she boasts
 Establish sounder titles of esteem
 For her, who (all too timid and reserved
 For onset, for resistance too inert,
 Too weak for suffering, and for hope too tame)
 Placed, among flowery gardens curtained round
 With world-excluding groves, the brotherhood
 Of soft Epicureans, taught—if they
 The ends of being would secure, and win
 The crown of wisdom—to yield up their souls
 To a voluptuous unconcern, preferring
 Tranquillity to all things. Or is she,”
 I cried, “ more worthy of regard, the Power,
 Who, for the sake of sterner quiet, closed
 The Stoic’s heart against the vain approach
 Of admiration, and all sense of joy ! ”

His countenance gave notice that my zeal
 Accorded little with his present mind ;
 I ceased, and he resumed.—“ Ah ! gentle Sir,
 Slight, if you will, the means ; but spare to slight
 The end of those, who did, by system, rank,
 As the prime object of a wise man’s aim,
 Security from shock of accident,
 Release from fear ; and cherished peaceful days
 For their own sakes, as mortal life’s chief good,
 And only reasonable felicity.
 What motive drew, what impulse, I would ask,
 Through a long course of later ages, drove,
 The hermit to his cell in forest wide ;
 Or what detained him, till his closing eyes
 Took their last farewell of the sun and stars,
 Fast anchored in the desert ?—Not alone
 Dread of the persecuting sword, remorse,
 Wrongs unredressed, or insults unavenged

And unavengable, defeated pride,
 Prosperity subverted, maddening want,
 Friendship betrayed, affection unreturned,
 Love with despair, or grief in agony ;—
 Not always from intolerable pangs
 He fled ; but, compassed round by pleasure, sighed
 For independent happiness ; craving peace,
 The central feeling of all happiness,
 Not as a refuge from distress or pain,
 A breathing-time, vacation, or a truce,
 But for its absolute self ; a life of peace,
 Stability without regret or fear ;
 That hath been, is, and shall be evermore !—
 Such the reward he sought ; and wore out life,
 There, where on few external things his heart
 Was set, and those his own ; or, if not his,
 Subsisting under nature's stedfast law.

What other yearning was the master tie
 Of the monastic brotherhood, upon rock
 Aërial, or in green secluded vale,
 One after one, collected from afar,
 An undissolving fellowship ?—What but this,
 The universal instinct of repose,
 The longing for confirmed tranquillity,
 Inward and outward ; humble, yet sublime :
 The life where hope and memory are as one ;
 Where earth is quiet and her face unchanged
 Save by the simplest toil of human hands
 Or seasons' difference ; the immortal Soul
 Consistent in self-rule ; and heaven revealed
 To meditation in that quietness !—
 Such was their scheme : and though the wished for
 end

By multitudes was missed, perhaps attained
 By none, they for the attempt, and pains employed,
 Do, in my present censure, stand redeemed
 From the unqualified disdain, that once
 Would have been cast upon them by my voice
 Delivering her decisions from the seat
 Of forward youth—that scruples not to solve
 Doubts, and determine questions, by the rules
 Of inexperienced judgment, ever prone
 To overweening faith ; and is inflamed,
 By courage, to demand from real life
 The test of act and suffering, to provoke
 Hostility—how dreadful when it comes,
 Whether affliction be the foe, or guilt !

A child of earth, I rested, in that stage
 Of my past course to which these thoughts advert,
 Upon earth's native energies ; forgetting
 That mine was a condition which required

Nor energy, nor fortitude—a calm
 Without vicissitude ; which, if the like
 Had been presented to my view elsewhere,
 I might have even been tempted to despise.
 But no—for the serene was also bright ;
 Enlivened happiness with joy o'erflowing,
 With joy, and—oh ! that memory should survive
 To speak the word—with rapture ! Nature's boon,
 Life's genuine inspiration, happiness
 Above what rules can teach, or fancy feign ;
 Abused, as all possessions *are* abused
 That are not prized according to their worth.
 And yet, what worth ? what good is given to men,
 More solid than the gilded clouds of heaven ?
 What joy more lasting than a vernal flower ?—
 None ! 'tis the general plaint of human kind
 In solitude : and mutually addressed
 From each to all, for wisdom's sake :—This truth
 The priest announces from his holy seat :
 And, crowned with garlands in the summer grove,
 The poet fits it to his pensive lyre.
 Yet, ere that final resting-place be gained,
 Sharp contradictions may arise, by doom
 Of this same life, compelling us to grieve
 That the prosperities of love and joy
 Should be permitted, oft-times, to endure
 So long, and be at once cast down for ever.
 Oh ! tremble, ye, to whom hath been assigned
 A course of days composing happy months,
 And they as happy years ; the present still
 So like the past, and both so firm a pledge
 Of a congenial future, that the wheels
 Of pleasure move without the aid of hope :
 For Mutability is Nature's bane ;
 And slighted Hope *will* be avenged ; and, when
 Ye need her favours, ye shall find her not ;
 But in her stead—fear—doubt—and agony !”

This was the bitter language of the heart :
 But, while he spake, look, gesture, tone of voice,
 Though discomposed and vehement, were such
 As skill and graceful nature might suggest
 To a proficient of the tragic scene
 Standing before the multitude, beset
 With dark events. Desirous to divert
 Or stem the current of the speaker's thoughts,
 We signified a wish to leave that place
 Of stillness and close privacy, a nook
 That seemed for self-examination made ;
 Or, for confession, in the sinner's need,
 Hidden from all men's view. To our attempt
 He yielded not ; but, pointing to a slope
 Of mossy turf defended from the sun,
 And on that couch inviting us to rest,

Full on that tender-hearted Man he turned
A serious eye, and his speech thus renewed.

“You never saw, your eyes did never look
On the bright form of Her whom once I loved :—
Her silver voice was heard upon the earth,
A sound unknown to you ; else, honoured Friend !
Your heart had borne a pitiable share
Of what I suffered, when I wept that loss,
And suffer now, not seldom, from the thought
That I remember, and can weep no more.—
Stripped as I am of all the golden fruit
Of self-esteem ; and by the cutting blasts
Of self-reproach familiarly assailed ;
Yet would I not be of such wintry bareness
But that some leaf of your regard should hang
Upon my naked branches :—lively thoughts
Give birth, full often, to unguarded words ;
I grieve that, in your presence, from my tongue
Too much of frailty hath already dropped ;
But that too much demands still more.

You know,

Revered Compatriot—and to you, kind Sir,
(Not to be deemed a stranger, as you come
Following the guidance of these welcome feet
To our secluded vale) it may be told—
That my demerits did not sue in vain
To One on whose mild radiance many gazed
With hope, and all with pleasure. This fair
Bride—

In the devotedness of youthful love,
Preferring me to parents, and the choir
Of gay companions, to the natal roof,
And all known places and familiar sights
(Resigned with sadness gently weighing down
Her trembling expectations, but no more
Than did to her due honour, and to me
Yielded, that day, a confidence sublime
In what I had to build upon)—this Bride,
Young, modest, meek, and beautiful, I led
To a low cottage in a sunny bay,
Where the salt sea innocuously breaks,
And the sea breeze as innocently breathes,
On Devon's leafy shores ;—a sheltered hold,
In a soft clime encouraging the soil
To a luxuriant bounty !—As our steps
Approach the embowered abode—our chosen seat—
See, rooted in the earth, her kindly bed,
The unendangered myrtle, decked with flowers,
Before the threshold stands to welcome us !
While, in the flowering myrtle's neighbourhood,
Not overlooked but courting no regard,
Those native plants, the holly and the yew,
Gave modest intimation to the mind

How willingly their aid they would unite
With the green myrtle, to endear the hours
Of winter, and protect that pleasant place.
—Wild were the walks upon those lonely Downs,
Track leading into track ; how marked, how worn
Into bright verdure, between fern and gorse,
Winding away its never ending line
On their smooth surface, evidence was none :
But, there, lay open to our daily haunt,
A range of unappropriated earth,
Where youth's ambitious feet might move at large ;
Whence, unmolested wanderers, we beheld
The shining giver of the day diffuse
His brightness o'er a tract of sea and land
Gay as our spirits, free as our desires ;
As our enjoyments, boundless.—From those heights
We dropped, at pleasure, into sylvan combs ;
Where arbours of impenetrable shade,
And mossy seats, detained us side by side,
With hearts at ease, and knowledge in our hearts
'That all the grove and all the day was ours.'

O happy time ! still happier was at hand ;
For Nature called my Partner to resign
Her share in the pure freedom of that life,
Enjoyed by us in common.—To my hope,
To my heart's wish, my tender Mate became
The thankful captive of maternal bonds ;
And those wild paths were left to me alone.
There could I meditate on follies past ;
And, like a weary voyager escaped
From risk and hardship, inwardly retrace
A course of vain delights and thoughtless guilt,
And self-indulgence—without shame pursued.
There, undisturbed, could think of and could thank
Her whose submissive spirit was to me
Rule and restraint—my guardian—shall I say
That earthly Providence, whose guiding love
Within a port of rest had lodged me safe ;
Safe from temptation, and from danger far !
Strains followed of acknowledgment addressed
To an Authority enthroned above
The reach of sight ; from whom, as from their
source,

Proceed all visible ministers of good
That walk the earth—Father of heaven and earth,
Father, and king, and judge, adored and feared !
These acts of mind, and memory, and heart,
And spirit—interrupted and relieved
By observations transient as the glance
Of flying sunbeams, or to the outward form
Cleaving with power inherent and intense,
As the mute insect fixed upon the plant
On whose soft leaves it hangs, and from whose cup

It draws its nourishment imperceptibly—
 Endeared my wanderings ; and the mother's kiss
 And infant's smile awaited my return.

In privacy we dwelt, a wedded pair,
 Companions daily, often all day long ;
 Not placed by fortune within easy reach
 Of various intercourse, nor wishing aught
 Beyond the allowance of our own fire-side,
 The twain within our happy cottage born,
 Inmates, and heirs of our united love ;
 Graced mutually by difference of sex,
 And with no wider interval of time
 Between their several births than served for one
 To establish something of a leader's sway ;
 Yet left them joined by sympathy in age ;
 Equals in pleasure, fellows in pursuit.
 On these two pillars rested as in air
 Our solitude.

It soothes me to perceive,
 Your courtesy withholds not from my words
 Attentive audience. But, oh ! gentle Friends,
 As times of quiet and unbroken peace,
 Though, for a nation, times of blessedness,
 Give back faint echoes from the historian's page ;
 So, in the imperfect sounds of this discourse,
 Depressed I hear, how faithless is the voice
 Which those most blissful days reverberate.
 What special record can, or need, be given
 To rules and habits, whereby much was done,
 But all within the sphere of little things ;
 Of humble, though, to us, important cares,
 And precious interests ? Smoothly did our life
 Advance, swerving not from the path prescribed ;
 Her annual, her diurnal, round alike
 Maintained with faithful care. And you divine
 The worst effects that our condition saw
 If you imagine changes slowly wrought,
 And in their progress unperceivable ;
 Not wished for ; sometimes noticed with a sigh,
 (Whate'er of good or lovely they might bring)
 Sighs of regret, for the familiar good
 And loveliness endeared which they removed.

Seven years of occupation undisturbed
 Established seemingly a right to hold
 That happiness ; and use and habit gave
 To what an alien spirit had acquired
 A patrimonial sanctity. And thus,
 With thoughts and wishes bounded to this world,
 I lived and breathed ; most grateful—if to enjoy
 Without repining or desire for more,
 For different lot, or change to higher sphere,
 (Only except some impulses of pride

With no determined object, though upheld
 By theories with suitable support)—
 Most grateful, if in such wise to enjoy
 Be proof of gratitude for what we have ;
 Else, I allow, most thankless.—But, at once,
 From some dark seat of fatal power was urged
 A claim that shattered all.—Our blooming girl,
 Caught in the gripe of death, with such brief time
 To struggle in as scarcely would allow
 Her cheek to change its colour, was conveyed
 From us to inaccessible worlds, to regions
 Where height, or depth, admits not the approach
 Of living man, though longing to pursue.
 —With even as brief a warning—and how soon,
 With what short interval of time between,
 I tremble yet to think of—our last prop,
 Our happy life's only remaining stay—
 The brother followed ; and was seen no more !

Calm as a frozen lake when ruthless winds
 Blow fiercely, agitating earth and sky,
 The Mother now remained ; as if in her,
 Who, to the lowest region of the soul,
 Had been erewhile unsettled and disturbed,
 This second visitation had no power
 To shake ; but only to bind up and seal ;
 And to establish thankfulness of heart
 In Heaven's determinations, ever just.
 The eminence whereon her spirit stood,
 Mine was unable to attain. Immense
 The space that severed us ! But, as the sight
 Communicates with heaven's ethereal orbs
 Incalculably distant ; so, I felt
 That consolation may descend from far
 (And that is intercourse, and union, too,)
 While, overcome with speechless gratitude,
 And, with a holier love inspired, I looked
 On her—at once superior to my woes
 And partner of my loss.—O heavy change !
 Dimness o'er this clear luminary crept
 Insensibly ;—the immortal and divine
 Yielded to mortal reflux ; her pure glory,
 As from the pinnacle of worldly state
 Wretched ambition drops astounded, fell
 Into a gulf obscure of silent grief,
 And keen heart-anguish—of itself ashamed,
 Yet obstinately cherishing itself :
 And, so consumed, she melted from my arms ;
 And left me, on this earth, disconsolate !

What followed cannot be reviewed in thought ;
 Much less, retraced in words. If she, of life
 Blameless, so intimate with love and joy
 And all the tender motions of the soul,

Had been supplanted, could I hope to stand—
 Infirm, dependent, and now destitute ?
 I called on dreams and visions, to disclose
 That which is veiled from waking thought ;
 conjured

Eternity, as men constrain a ghost
 To appear and answer ; to the grave I spake
 Imploringly ;—looked up, and asked the Heavens
 If Angels traversed their cerulean floors,
 If fixed or wandering star could tidings yield
 Of the departed spirit—what abode
 It occupies—what consciousness retains
 Of former loves and interests. Then my soul
 Turned inward,—to examine of what stuff
 Time's fetters are composed ; and life was put
 To inquisition, long and profitless !
 By pain of heart—now checked—and now impel-
 led—

The intellectual power, through words and things,
 Went sounding on, a dim and perilous way !
 And from those transports, and these toils abstruse,
 Some trace am I enabled to retain
 Of time, else lost ;—existing unto me
 Only by records in myself not found.

From that abstraction I was roused,—and how !
 Even as a thoughtful shepherd by a flash
 Of lightning startled in a gloomy cave
 Of these wild hills. For, lo ! the dread Bastile,
 With all the chambers in its horrid towers,
 Fell to the ground :—by violence overthrown
 Of indignation ; and with shouts that drowned
 The crash it made in falling ! From the wreck
 A golden palace rose, or seemed to rise,
 The appointed seat of equitable law
 And mild paternal sway. The potent shock
 I felt : the transformation I perceived,
 As marvellously seized as in that moment
 When, from the blind mist issuing, I beheld
 Glory—beyond all glory ever seen,
 Confusion infinite of heaven and earth,
 Dazzling the soul. Meanwhile, prophetic harps
 In every grove were ringing, ' War shall cease ;
 ' Did ye not hear that conquest is abjured ?
 ' Bring garlands, bring forth choicest flowers, to
 deck

' The tree of Liberty.'—My heart rebounded ;
 My melancholy voice the chorus joined ;
 —' Be joyful all ye nations ; in all lands,
 ' Ye that are capable of joy be glad !
 ' Henceforth, whate'er is wanting to yourselves
 ' In others ye shall promptly find ;—and all,
 ' Enriched by mutual and reflected wealth,
 ' Shall with one heart honour their common kind.'

Thus was I reconverted to the world ;
 Society became my glittering bride,
 And airy hopes my children.—From the depths
 Of natural passion, seemingly escaped,
 My soul diffused herself in wide embrace
 Of institutions, and the forms of things ;
 As they exist, in mutable array,
 Upon life's surface. What, though in my veins
 There flowed no Gallic blood, nor had I breathed
 The air of France, not less than Gallic zeal
 Kindled and burnt among the sapless twigs
 Of my exhausted heart. If busy men
 In sober conclave met, to weave a web
 Of amity, whose living threads should stretch
 Beyond the seas, and to the farthest pole,
 There did I sit, assisting. If, with noise
 And acclamation, crowds in open air
 Expressed the tumult of their minds, my voice
 There mingled, heard or not. The powers of song
 I left not uninvoked ; and, in still groves,
 Where mild enthusiasts tuned a pensive lay
 Of thanks and expectation, in accord
 With their belief, I sang Saturnian rule
 Returned,—a progeny of golden years
 Permitted to descend, and bless mankind.

—With promises the Hebrew Scriptures teem :
 I felt their invitation ; and resumed
 A long-suspended office in the House
 Of public worship, where, the glowing phrase
 Of ancient inspiration serving me,
 I promised also,—with undaunted trust
 Foretold, and added prayer to prophecy ;
 The admiration winning of the crowd ;
 The help desiring of the pure devout.

Scorn and contempt forbid me to proceed !
 But History, time's slavish scribe, will tell
 How rapidly the zealots of the cause
 Disbanded—or in hostile ranks appeared ;
 Some, tired of honest service ; these, outdone,
 Disgusted therefore, or appalled, by aims
 Of fiercer zealots—so confusion reigned,
 And the more faithful were compelled to exclaim,
 As Brutus did to Virtue, ' Liberty,
 ' I worshipped thee, and find thee but a Shade !'

Such recantation had for me no charm,
 Nor would I bend to it ; who should have grieved
 At aught, however fair, that bore the mien
 Of a conclusion, or catastrophe.
 Why then conceal, that, when the simple good
 In timid selfishness withdrew, I sought
 Other support, not scrupulous whence it came ;
 And, by what compromise it stood, not nice !

Enough if notions seemed to be high-pitched,
 And qualities determined.—Among men
 So character'd did I maintain a strife
 Hopeless, and still more hopeless every hour ;
 But, in the process, I began to feel
 That, if the emancipation of the world
 Were missed, I should at least secure my own,
 And be in part compensated. For rights,
 Widely—inveterately usurped upon,
 I spake with vehemence ; and promptly seized
 All that Abstraction furnished for my needs
 Or purposes ; nor scrupled to proclaim,
 And propagate, by liberty of life,
 Those new persuasions. Not that I rejoiced,
 Or even found pleasure, in such vagrant course,
 For its own sake ; but farthest from the walk
 Which I had trod in happiness and peace,
 Was most inviting to a troubled mind ;
 That, in a struggling and distempered world,
 Saw a seductive image of herself.
 Yet, mark the contradictions of which Man
 Is still the sport ! Here Nature was my guide,
 The Nature of the dissolute ; but thee,
 O fostering Nature ! I rejected—smiled
 At others' tears in pity ; and in scorn
 At those, which thy soft influence sometimes drew
 From my unguarded heart.—The tranquil shores
 Of Britain circumscribed me ; else, perhaps
 I might have been entangled among deeds,
 Which, now, as infamous, I should abhor—
 Despise, as senseless : for my spirit relished
 Strangely the exasperation of that Land,
 Which turned an angry beak against the down
 Of her own breast ; confounded into hope
 Of disencumbering thus her fretful wings.

But all was quieted by iron bonds
 Of military sway. The shifting aims,
 The moral interests, the creative might,
 The varied functions and high attributes
 Of civil action, yielded to a power
 Formal, and odious, and contemptible.
 —In Britain, ruled a panic dread of change ;
 The weak were praised, rewarded, and advanced ;
 And, from the impulse of a just disdain,
 Once more did I retire into myself.
 There feeling no contentment, I resolved
 To fly, for safeguard, to some foreign shore,
 Remote from Europe ; from her blasted hopes ;
 Her fields of carnage, and polluted air.

Fresh blew the wind, when o'er the Atlantic Main
 The ship went gliding with her thoughtless crew ;
 And who among them but an Exile, freed

From discontent, indifferent, pleased to sit
 Among the busily-employed, not more
 With obligation charged, with service taxed,
 Than the loose pendant—to the idle wind
 Upon the tall mast streaming. But, ye Powers
 Of soul and sense mysteriously allied,
 O, never let the Wretched, if a choice
 Be left him, trust the freight of his distress
 To a long voyage on the silent deep !
 For, like a plague, will memory break out ;
 And, in the blank and solitude of things,
 Upon his spirit, with a fever's strength,
 Will conscience prey.—Feebly must they have felt
 Who, in old time, attired with snakes and whips
 The vengeful Furies. *Beautiful* regards
 Were turned on me—the face of her I loved ;
 The Wife and Mother pitifully fixing
 Tender reproaches, insupportable !
 Where now that boasted liberty ? No welcome
 From unknown objects I received ; and those,
 Known and familiar, which the vaulted sky
 Did, in the placid clearness of the night,
 Disclose, had accusations to prefer
 Against my peace. Within the cabin stood
 That volume—as a compass for the soul—
 Revered among the nations. I implored
 Its guidance ; but the infallible support
 Of faith was wanting. Tell me, why refused
 To One by storms annoyed and adverse winds ;
 Perplexed with currents ; of his weakness sick ;
 Of vain endeavours tired ; and by his own,
 And by his nature's, ignorance, dismayed !

Long-wished-for sight, the Western World
 appeared ;
 And, when the ship was moored, I leaped ashore
 Indignantly—resolved to be a man,
 Who, having o'er the past no power, would live
 No longer in subjection to the past,
 With abject mind—from a tyrannic lord
 Inviting penance, fruitlessly endured :
 So, like a fugitive, whose feet have cleared
 Some boundary, which his followers may not cross
 In prosecution of their deadly chase,
 Respiring I looked round.—How bright the sun,
 The breeze how soft ! Can any thing produced
 In the old World compare, thought I, for power
 And majesty with this gigantic stream,
 Sprung from the desert ? And behold a city
 Fresh, youthful, and aspiring ! What are these
 To me, or I to them ? As much at least
 As he desires that they should be, whom winds
 And waves have wafted to this distant shore,
 In the condition of a damaged seed,

Whose fibres cannot, if they would, take root.
 Here may I roam at large ;—my business is,
 Roaming at large, to observe, and not to feel
 And, therefore, not to act—convinced that all
 Which bears the name of action, howsoe'er
 Beginning, ends in servitude—still painful,
 And mostly profitless. And, sooth to say,
 On nearer view, a motley spectacle
 Appeared, of high pretensions—unproved
 But by the obstreperous voice of higher still ;
 Big passions strutting on a petty stage ;
 Which a detached spectator may regard
 Not unamused.—But ridicule demands
 Quick change of objects ; and, to laugh alone,
 At a composing distance from the haunts
 Of strife and folly, though it be a treat
 As choice as musing Leisure can bestow ;
 Yet, in the very centre of the crowd,
 To keep the secret of a poignant scorn,
 Howe'er to airy Demons suitable,
 Of all unsocial courses, is least fit
 For the gross spirit of mankind,—the one
 That soonest fails to please, and quickest turns
 Into vexation.

Let us, then, I said,
 Leave this unknit Republic to the scourge
 Of her own passions ; and to regions haste,
 Whose shades have never felt the encroaching axe,
 Or soil endured a transfer in the mart
 Of dire rapacity. There, Man abides,
 Primeval Nature's child. A creature weak
 In combination, (wherefore else driven back
 So far, and of his old inheritance
 So easily deprived ?) but, for that cause,
 More dignified, and stronger in himself ;
 Whether to act, judge, suffer, or enjoy.
 True, the intelligence of social art
 Hath overpowered his forefathers, and soon
 Will sweep the remnant of his line away ;
 But contemplations, worthier, nobler far
 Than her destructive energies, attend
 His independence, when along the side
 Of Mississippi, or that northern stream
 That spreads into successive seas, he walks ;
 Pleased to perceive his own unshackled life,
 And his innate capacities of soul,
 There imaged : or when, having gained the top
 Of some commanding eminence, which yet
 Intruder ne'er beheld, he thence surveys
 Regions of wood and wide savannah, vast
 Expanse of unappropriated earth,
 With mind that sheds a light on what he sees ;
 Free as the sun, and lonely as the sun,

Pouring above his head its radiance down
 Upon a living and rejoicing world !

So, westward, tow'rd the unviolated woods
 I bent my way ; and, roaming far and wide,
 Failed not to greet the merry Mocking-bird ;
 And, while the melancholy Muccawiss
 (The sportive bird's companion in the grove)
 Repeated, o'er and o'er, his plaintive cry,
 I sympathised at leisure with the sound ;
 But that pure archetype of human greatness,
 I found him not. There, in his stead, appeared
 A creature, squalid, vengeful, and impure ;
 Remorseless, and submissive to no law
 But superstitious fear, and abject sloth.

Enough is told ! Here am I—ye have heard
 What evidence I seek, and vainly seek ;
 What from my fellow-beings I require,
 And either they have not to give, or I
 Lack virtue to receive ; what I myself,
 Too oft by wilful forfeiture, have lost
 Nor can regain. How languidly I look
 Upon this visible fabric of the world,
 May be divined—perhaps it hath been said :—
 But spare your pity, if there be in me
 Aught that deserves respect : for I exist,
 Within myself, not comfortless.—The tenour
 Which my life holds, he readily may conceive
 Whoe'er hath stood to watch a mountain brook
 In some still passage of its course, and seen,
 Within the depths of its capacious breast,
 Inverted trees, rocks, clouds, and azure sky ;
 And, on its glassy surface, specks of foam,
 And conglobated bubbles undissolved,
 Numerous as stars ; that, by their onward lapse,
 Betray to sight the motion of the stream,
 Else imperceptible. Meanwhile, is heard
 A softened roar, or murmur ; and the sound
 Though soothing, and the little floating isles
 Though beautiful, are both by Nature charged
 With the same pensive office ; and make known
 Through what perplexing labyrinths, abrupt
 Precipitations, and untoward straits,
 The earth-born wanderer hath passed ; and quickly,
 That respite o'er, like traverses and toils
 Must he again encounter.—Such a stream
 Is human Life ; and so the Spirit fares
 In the best quiet to her course allowed ;
 And such is mine,—save only for a hope
 That my particular current soon will reach
 The unfathomable gulf, where all is still !”

BOOK FOURTH.

DESPONDENCY CORRECTED.

ARGUMENT.

State of feeling produced by the foregoing Narrative—A belief in a superintending Providence the only adequate support under affliction—Wanderer's ejaculation—Acknowledges the difficulty of a lively faith—Hence immoderate sorrow—Exhortations—How received—Wanderer applies his discourse to that other cause of dejection in the Solitary's mind—Disappointment from the French Revolution—States grounds of hope, and insists on the necessity of patience and fortitude with respect to the course of great revolutions—Knowledge the source of tranquillity—Rural Solitude favourable to knowledge of the inferior Creatures; Study of their habits and ways recommended; exhortation to bodily exertion and communion with Nature—Morbid Solitude pitiable—Superstition better than apathy—Apathy and destitution unknown in the infancy of society—The various modes of Religion prevented it—Illustrated in the Jewish, Persian, Babylonian, Chaldean, and Grecian modes of belief—Solitary interposes—Wanderer points out the influence of religious and imaginative feeling in the humble ranks of society, illustrated from present and past times—These principles tend to recal exploded superstitions and popery—Wanderer rebuts this charge, and contrasts the dignities of the Imagination with the presumptuous littleness of certain modern Philosophers—Recommends other lights and guides—Asserts the power of the Soul to regenerate herself; Solitary asks how—Reply—Personal appeal—Exhortation to activity of body renewed—How to commune with Nature—Wanderer concludes with a legitimate union of the imagination, affections, understanding, and reason—Effect of his discourse—Evening; Return to the Cottage.

HERE closed the Tenant of that lonely vale
His mournful narrative—commenced in pain,
In pain commenced, and ended without peace:
Yet tempered, not unfrequently, with strains
Of native feeling, grateful to our minds;
And yielding surely some relief to his,
While we sate listening with compassion due.
A pause of silence followed; then, with voice
That did not falter though the heart was moved,
The Wanderer said:—

“One adequate support

For the calamities of mortal life
Exists—one only; an assured belief
That the procession of our fate, howe'er
Sad or disturbed, is ordered by a Being
Of infinite benevolence and power;
Whose everlasting purposes embrace
All accidents, converting them to good.
—The darts of anguish *fix* not where the seat

Of suffering hath been thoroughly fortified
By acquiescence in the Will supreme
For time and for eternity; by faith,
Faith absolute in God, including hope,
And the defence that lies in boundless love
Of his perfections; with habitual dread
Of aught unworthily conceived, endured
Impatiently, ill-done, or left undone,
To the dishonour of his holy name.
Soul of our Souls, and safeguard of the world!
Sustain, thou only canst, the sick of heart;
Restore their languid spirits, and recal
Their lost affections unto thee and thine!”

Then, as we issued from that covert nook,
He thus continued, lifting up his eyes
To heaven:—“How beautiful this dome of sky;
And the vast hills, in fluctuation fixed
At thy command, how awful! Shall the Soul,
Human and rational, report of thee
Even less than these?—Be mute who will, who
can,

Yet I will praise thee with impassioned voice:
My lips, that may forget thee in the crowd,
Cannot forget thee here; where thou hast built,
For thy own glory, in the wilderness!
Me didst thou constitute a priest of thine,
In such a temple as we now behold
Reared for thy presence: therefore, am I bound
To worship, here, and every where—as one
Not doomed to ignorance, though forced to tread,
From childhood up, the ways of poverty;
From unreflecting ignorance preserved,
And from debasement rescued.—By thy grace
The particle divine remained unquenched;
And, 'mid the wild weeds of a rugged soil,
Thy bounty caused to flourish deathless flowers,
From paradise transplanted: wintry age
Impends; the frost will gather round my heart;
If the flowers wither, I am worse than dead!
—Come, labour, when the worn-out frame requires
Perpetual sabbath; come, disease and want;
And sad exclusion through decay of sense;
But leave me unabated trust in thee—
And let thy favour, to the end of life,
Inspire me with ability to seek
Repose and hope among eternal things—
Father of heaven and earth! and I am rich,
And will possess my portion in content!

And what are things eternal?—powers depart,”
 The grey-haired Wanderer stedfastly replied,
 Answering the question which himself had asked,
 “Possessions vanish, and opinions change,
 And passions hold a fluctuating seat :

But, by the storms of circumstance unshaken,
 And subject neither to eclipse nor wane,
 Duty exists ;—immutably survive,
 For our support, the measures and the forms,
 Which an abstract intelligence supplies ;
 Whose kingdom is, where time and space are not.
 Of other converse which mind, soul, and heart,
 Do, with united urgency, require,
 What more that may not perish ?—Thou, dread
 source,

Prime, self-existing cause and end of all
 That in the scale of being fill their place ;
 Above our human region, or below,
 Set and sustained ;—thou, who didst wrap the cloud
 Of infancy around us, that thyself,
 Therein, with our simplicity awhile
 Might'st hold, on earth, communion undisturbed ;
 Who from the anarchy of dreaming sleep,
 Or from its death-like void, with punctual care,
 And touch as gentle as the morning light,
 Restor'st us, daily, to the powers of sense
 And reason's stedfast rule—thou, thou alone
 Art everlasting, and the blessed Spirits,
 Which thou includest, as the sea her waves :
 For adoration thou endur'st ; endure
 For consciousness the motions of thy will ;
 For apprehension those transcendent truths
 Of the pure intellect, that stand as laws
 (Submission constituting strength and power)
 Even to thy Being's infinite majesty !
 This universe shall pass away—a work
 Glorious ! because the shadow of thy might,
 A step, or link, for intercourse with thee.
 Ah ! if the time must come, in which my feet
 No more shall stray where meditation leads,
 By flowing stream, through wood, or craggy wild,
 Loved haunts like these ; the unimprisoned Mind
 May yet have scope to range among her own,
 Her thoughts, her images, her high desires.
 If the dear faculty of sight should fail,
 Still, it may be allowed me to remember
 What visionary powers of eye and soul
 In youth were mine ; when, stationed on the top
 Of some huge hill—expectant, I beheld
 The sun rise up, from distant climes returned
 Darkness to chase, and sleep ; and bring the day
 His bounteous gift ! or saw him toward the deep
 Sink, with a retinue of flaming clouds
 Attended ; then, my spirit was entranced

With joy exalted to beatitude ;
 The measure of my soul was filled with bliss,
 And holiest love ; as earth, sea, air, with light,
 With pomp, with glory, with magnificence !

Those fervent raptures are for ever flown ;
 And, since their date, my soul hath undergone
 Change manifold, for better or for worse :
 Yet cease I not to struggle, and aspire
 Heavenward ; and chide the part of me that flags,
 Through sinful choice ; or dread necessity
 On human nature from above imposed.
 'Tis, by comparison, an easy task
 Earth to despise ; but, to converse with heaven—
 This is not easy :—to relinquish all
 We have, or hope, of happiness and joy,
 And stand in freedom loosened from this world,
 I deem not arduous ; but must needs confess
 That 'tis a thing impossible to frame
 Conceptions equal to the soul's desires ;
 And the most difficult of tasks to *keep*
 Heights which the soul is competent to gain.
 —Man is of dust : ethereal hopes are his,
 Which, when they should sustain themselves aloft,
 Want due consistence ; like a pillar of smoke,
 That with majestic energy from earth
 Rises ; but, having reached the thinner air,
 Melts, and dissolves, and is no longer seen.
 From this infirmity of mortal kind
 Sorrow proceeds, which else were not ; at least,
 If grief be something hallowed and ordained,
 If, in proportion, it be just and meet,
 Yet, through this weakness of the general heart,
 Is it enabled to maintain its hold
 In that excess which conscience disapproves.
 For who could sink and settle to that point
 Of selfishness ; so senseless who could be
 As long and perseveringly to mourn
 For any object of his love, removed
 From this unstable world, if he could fix
 A satisfying view upon that state
 Of pure, imperishable, blessedness,
 Which reason promises, and holy writ
 Ensures to all believers ?—Yet mistrust
 Is of such incapacity, methinks,
 No natural branch ; despondency far less ;
 And, least of all, is absolute despair.
 —And, if there be whose tender frames have drooped
 Even to the dust ; apparently, through weight
 Of anguish unrelieved, and lack of power
 An agonizing sorrow to transmute ;
 Deem not that proof is here of hope withheld
 When wanted most ; a confidence impaired
 So pitifully, that, having ceased to see

With bodily eyes, they are borne down by love
 Of what is lost, and perish through regret.
 Oh! no, the innocent Sufferer often sees
 Too clearly; feels too vividly; and longs
 To realize the vision, with intense
 And over-constant yearning;—there—there lies
 The excess, by which the balance is destroyed.
 Too, too contracted are these walls of flesh,
 This vital warmth too cold, these visual orbs,
 Though inconceivably endowed, too dim
 For any passion of the soul that leads
 To ecstasy; and, all the crooked paths
 Of time and change disdaining, takes its course
 Along the line of limitless desires.
 I, speaking now from such disorder free,
 Nor rapt, nor craving, but in settled peace,
 I cannot doubt that they whom you deplore
 Are glorified; or, if they sleep, shall wake
 From sleep, and dwell with God in endless love.
 Hope, below this, consists not with belief
 In mercy, carried infinite degrees
 Beyond the tenderness of human hearts:
 Hope, below this, consists not with belief
 In perfect wisdom, guiding mightiest power,
 That finds no limits but her own pure will.

Here then we rest; not fearing for our creed
 The worst that human reasoning can achieve,
 To unsettle or perplex it: yet with pain
 Acknowledging, and grievous self-reproach,
 That, though immovably convinced, we want
 Zeal, and the virtue to exist by faith
 As soldiers live by courage; as, by strength
 Of heart, the sailor fights with roaring seas.
 Alas! the endowment of immortal power
 Is matched unequally with custom, time,
 And domineering faculties of sense
 In *all*; in most with superadded foes,
 Idle temptations; open vanities,
 Ephemeral offspring of the unblushing world;
 And, in the private regions of the mind,
 Ill-governed passions, ranklings of despite,
 Immoderate wishes, pining discontent,
 Distress and care. What then remains?—To seek
 Those helps for his occasions ever near
 Who lacks not will to use them; vows, renewed
 On the first motion of a holy thought;
 Vigils of contemplation; praise; and prayer—
 A stream, which, from the fountain of the heart
 Issuing, however feebly, nowhere flows
 Without access of unexpected strength.
 But, above all, the victory is most sure
 For him, who, seeking faith by virtue, strives
 To yield entire submission to the law

Of conscience—conscience revered and obeyed,
 As God's most intimate presence in the soul,
 And his most perfect image in the world.
 —Endeavour thus to live; these rules regard;
 These helps solicit; and a steadfast seat
 Shall then be yours among the happy few
 Who dwell on earth, yet breathe empyreal air,
 Sons of the morning. For your nobler part,
 Ere disencumbered of her mortal chains,
 Doubt shall be quelled and trouble chased away;
 With only such degree of sadness left
 As may support longings of pure desire;
 And strengthen love, rejoicing secretly
 In the sublime attractions of the grave.”

While, in this strain, the venerable Sage
 Poured forth his aspirations, and announced
 His judgments, near that lonely house we paced
 A plot of green-sward, seemingly preserved
 By nature's care from wreck of scattered stones,
 And from encroachment of encircling heath:
 Small space! but, for reiterated steps,
 Smooth and commodious; as a stately deck
 Which to and fro the mariner is used
 To tread for pastime, talking with his mates,
 Or haply thinking of far-distant friends,
 While the ship glides before a steady breeze.
 Stillness prevailed around us: and the voice
 That spake was capable to lift the soul
 Toward regions yet more tranquil. But, methought,
 That he, whose fixed despondency had given
 Impulse and motive to that strong discourse,
 Was less upraised in spirit than abashed;
 Shrinking from admonition, like a man
 Who feels that to exhort is to reproach.
 Yet not to be diverted from his aim,
 The Sage continued:—

“For that other loss,
 The loss of confidence in social man,
 By the unexpected transports of our age
 Carried so high, that every thought, which looked
 Beyond the temporal destiny of the Kind,
 To many seemed superfluous—as, no cause
 Could e'er for such exalted confidence
 Exist; so, none is now for fixed despair:
 The two extremes are equally disowned
 By reason: if, with sharp recoil, from one
 You have been driven far as its opposite,
 Between them seek the point whereon to build
 Sound expectations. So doth he advise
 Who shared at first the illusion; but was soon
 Cast from the pedestal of pride by shocks
 Which Nature gently gave, in woods and fields;
 Nor unreprieved by Providence, thus speaking

To the inattentive children of the world :
 ' Vain-glorious Generation ! what new powers
 ' On you have been conferred ? what gifts, withheld
 ' From your progenitors, have ye received,
 ' Fit recompense of new desert ? what claim
 ' Are ye prepared to urge, that my decrees
 ' For you should undergo a sudden change ;
 ' And the weak functions of one busy day,
 ' Reclaiming and extirpating, perform
 ' What all the slowly-moving years of time,
 ' With their united force, have left undone ?
 ' By nature's gradual processes be taught ;
 ' By story be confounded ! Ye aspire
 ' Rashly, to fall once more ; and that false fruit,
 ' Which, to your over-weening spirits, yields
 ' Hope of a flight celestial, will produce
 ' Misery and shame. But Wisdom of her sons
 ' Shall not the less, though late, be justified.'

Such timely warning," said the Wanderer, "gave
 That visionary voice ; and, at this day,
 When a Tartarean darkness overspreads
 The groaning nations ; when the iniquitous rule,
 By will or by established ordinance,
 Their own dire agents, and constrain the good
 To acts which they abhor ; though I bewail
 This triumph, yet the pity of my heart
 Prevents me not from owning, that the law,
 By which mankind now suffers, is most just.
 For by superior energies ; more strict
 Affiance in each other ; faith more firm
 In their unhallowed principles ; the bad
 Have fairly earned a victory o'er the weak,
 The vacillating, inconsistent good.
 Therefore, not unconsoled, I wait—in hope
 To see the moment, when the righteous cause
 Shall gain defenders zealous and devout
 As they who have opposed her ; in which Virtue
 Will, to her efforts, tolerate no bounds
 That are not lofty as her rights ; aspiring
 By impulse of her own ethereal zeal.
 That spirit only can redeem mankind ;
 And when that sacred spirit shall appear,
 Then shall *our* triumph be complete as theirs.
 Yet, should this confidence prove vain, the wise
 Have still the keeping of their proper peace ;
 Are guardians of their own tranquillity.
 They act, or they recede, observe, and feel ;
 ' Knowing the heart of man is set to be
 The centre of this world, about the which
 Those revolutions of disturbances
 Still roll ; where all the aspects of misery
 Predominate ; whose strong effects are such
 As he must bear, being powerless to redress ;

*And that unless above himself he can
 Erect himself, how poor a thing is Man !' **

Happy is he who lives to understand,
 Not human nature only, but explores
 All natures,—to the end that he may find
 The law that governs each ; and where begins
 The union, the partition where, that makes
 Kind and degree, among all visible Beings ;
 The constitutions, powers, and faculties,
 Which they inherit,—cannot step beyond,—
 And cannot fall beneath ; that do assign
 To every class its station and its office,
 Through all the mighty commonwealth of things ;
 Up from the creeping plant to sovereign Man.
 Such converse, if directed by a meek,
 Sincere, and humble spirit, teaches love :
 For knowledge is delight ; and such delight
 Breeds love : yet, suited as it rather is
 To thought and to the climbing intellect,
 It teaches less to love, than to adore ;
 If that be not indeed the highest love !"

"Yet," said I, tempted here to interpose,
 "The dignity of life is not impaired
 By aught that innocently satisfies
 The humbler cravings of the heart ; and he
 Is a still happier man, who, for those heights
 Of speculation not unfit, descends ;
 And such benign affections cultivates
 Among the inferior kinds ; not merely those
 That he may call his own, and which depend,
 As individual objects of regard,
 Upon his care, from whom he also looks
 For signs and tokens of a mutual bond ;
 But others, far beyond this narrow sphere,
 Whom, for the very sake of love, he loves.
 Nor is it a mean praise of rural life
 And solitude, that they do favour most,
 Most frequently call forth, and best sustain,
 These pure sensations ; that can penetrate
 The obstreperous city ; on the barren seas
 Are not unfelt ; and much might recommend,
 How much they might inspirit and endear,
 The loneliness of this sublime retreat !"

"Yes," said the Sage, resuming the discourse
 Again directed to his downcast Friend,
 "If, with the froward will and grovelling soul
 Of man, offended, liberty is here,
 And invitation every hour renewed,
 To mark *their* placid state, who never heard

Of a command which they have power to break,
 Or rule which they are tempted to transgress :
 These, with a soothed or elevated heart,
 May we behold ; their knowledge register ;
 Observe their ways ; and, free from envy, find
 Complacency there :—but wherefore this to you ?
 I guess that, welcome to your lonely hearth,
 The redbreast, ruffled up by winter's cold
 Into a ' feathery bunch,' feeds at your hand :
 A box, perchance, is from your casement hung
 For the small wren to build in ;—not in vain,
 The barriers disregarding that surround
 This deep abiding place, before your sight
 Mounts on the breeze the butterfly ; and soars,
 Small creature as she is, from earth's bright flowers,
 Into the dewy clouds. Ambition reigns
 In the waste wilderness : the Soul ascends
 Drawn towards her native firmament of heaven,
 When the fresh eagle, in the month of May,
 Upborne, at evening, on replenished wing,
 This shaded valley leaves ; and leaves the dark
 Empurpled hills, conspicuously renewing
 A proud communication with the sun
 Low sunk beneath the horizon !—List !—I heard,
 From yon huge breast of rock, a voice sent forth
 As if the visible mountain made the cry.
 Again !"—The effect upon the soul was such
 As he expressed : from out the mountain's heart
 The solemn voice appeared to issue, startling
 The blank air—for the region all around
 Stood empty of all shape of life, and silent
 Save for that single cry, the unanswer'd bleat
 Of a poor lamb—left somewhere to itself,
 The plaintive spirit of the solitude !
 He paused, as if unwilling to proceed,
 Through consciousness that silence in such place
 Was best, the most affecting eloquence.
 But soon his thoughts returned upon themselves,
 And, in soft tone of speech, thus he resumed.

" Ah ! if the heart, too confidently raised,
 Perchance too lightly occupied, or lulled
 Too easily, despise or overlook
 The vassalage that binds her to the earth,
 Her sad dependence upon time, and all
 The trepidations of mortality,
 What place so destitute and void—but there
 The little flower her vanity shall check ;
 The trailing worm reprove her thoughtless pride !

These craggy regions, these chaotic wilds,
 Does that benignity pervade, that warms
 The mole contented with her darksome walk
 In the cold ground ; and to the emmet gives

Her foresight, and intelligence that makes
 The tiny creatures strong by social league ;
 Supports the generations, multiplies
 Their tribes, till we behold a spacious plain
 Or grassy bottom, all, with little hills—
 Their labour, covered, as a lake with waves ;
 Thousands of cities, in the desert place
 Built up of life, and food, and means of life !
 Nor wanting here, to entertain the thought,
 Creatures that in communities exist,
 Less, as might seem, for general guardianship
 Or through dependence upon mutual aid,
 Than by participation of delight
 And a strict love of fellowship, combined.
 What other spirit can it be that prompts
 The gilded summer flies to mix and weave
 Their sports together in the solar beam,
 Or in the gloom of twilight hum their joy ?
 More obviously the self-same influence rules
 The feathered kinds ; the fieldfare's pensive flock,
 The cawing rooks, and sea-mews from afar,
 Hovering above these inland solitudes,
 By the rough wind unscattered, at whose call
 Up through the trenches of the long-drawn vales
 Their voyage was begun : nor is its power
 Unfelt among the sedentary fowl
 That seek yon pool, and there prolong their stay
 In silent congress ; or together roused
 Take flight ; while with their clang the air resounds.
 And, over all, in that ethereal vault,
 Is the mute company of changeful clouds ;
 Bright apparition, suddenly put forth,
 The rainbow smiling on the faded storm ;
 The mild assemblage of the starry heavens ;
 And the great sun, earth's universal lord !

How bountiful is Nature ! he shall find
 Who seeks not ; and to him, who hath not asked,
 Large measure shall be dealt. Three sabbath-days
 Are scarcely told, since, on a service bent
 Of mere humanity, you clomb those heights ;
 And what a marvellous and heavenly show
 Was suddenly revealed !—the swains moved on,
 And heeded not : you lingered, you perceived
 And felt, deeply as living man could feel.
 There is a luxury in self-dispraise ;
 And inward self-disparagement affords
 To meditative spleen a grateful feast.
 Trust me, pronouncing on your own desert,
 You judge unthankfully : distempered nerves
 Infect the thoughts : the languor of the frame
 Depresses the soul's vigour. Quit your couch—
 Cleave not so fondly to your moody cell ;
 Nor let the hallowed powers, that shed from heaven

Stillness and rest, with disapproving eye
 Look down upon your taper, through a watch
 Of midnight hours, unseasonably twinkling
 In this deep Hollow, like a sullen star
 Dimly reflected in a lonely pool.

Take courage, and withdraw yourself from ways
 That run not parallel to nature's course.
 Rise with the lark ! your matins shall obtain
 Grace, be their composition what it may,
 If but with hers performed ; climb once again,
 Climb every day, those ramparts ; meet the breeze
 Upon their tops, adventurous as a bee
 That from your garden thither soars, to feed
 On new-blown heath ; let yon commanding rock
 Be your frequented watch-tower ; roll the stone
 In thunder down the mountains ; with all your
 might

Chase the wild goat ; and if the bold red deer
 Fly to those harbours, driven by hound and horn
 Loud echoing, add your speed to the pursuit ;
 So, wearied to your hut shall you return,
 And sink at evening into sound repose."

The Solitary lifted toward the hills
 A kindling eye :—accordant feelings rushed
 Into my bosom, whence these words broke forth :
 " Oh ! what a joy it were, in vigorous health,
 To have a body (this our vital frame
 With shrinking sensibility endued,
 And all the nice regards of flesh and blood)
 And to the elements surrender it
 As if it were a spirit !—How divine,
 The liberty, for frail, for mortal, man
 To roam at large among unpeopled glens
 And mountainous retirements, only trod
 By devious footsteps ; regions consecrate
 To oldest time ! and, reckless of the storm
 That keeps the raven quiet in her nest,
 Be as a presence or a motion—one
 Among the many there ; and while the mists
 Flying, and rainy vapours, call out shapes
 And phantoms from the crags and solid earth
 As fast as a musician scatters sounds
 Out of an instrument ; and while the streams
 (As at a first creation and in haste
 To exercise their untried faculties)
 Descending from the region of the clouds,
 And starting from the hollows of the earth
 More multitudinous every moment, rend
 Their way before them—what a joy to roam
 An equal among mightiest energies ;
 And haply sometimes with articulate voice,
 Amid the deafening tumult, scarcely heard
 By him that utters it, exclaim aloud,

'Rage on ye elements ! let moon and stars
 Their aspects lend, and mingle in their turn
 With this commotion (ruinous though it be)
 From day to night, from night to day, prolonged !'

" Yes," said the Wanderer, taking from my lips
 The strain of transport, " whose'er in youth
 Has, through ambition of his soul, given way
 To such desires, and grasped at such delight,
 Shall feel congenial stirrings late and long,
 In spite of all the weakness that life brings,
 Its cares and sorrows ; he, though taught to own
 The tranquillizing power of time, shall wake,
 Wake sometimes to a noble restlessness—
 Loving the sports which once he gloried in.

Compatriot, Friend, remote are Garry's hills,
 The streams far distant of your native glen ;
 Yet is their form and image here expressed
 With brotherly resemblance. Turn your steps
 Wherever fancy leads ; by day, by night,
 Are various engines working, not the same
 As those with which your soul in youth was moved,
 But by the great Artificer endowed
 With no inferior power. You dwell alone ;
 You walk, you live, you speculate alone ;
 Yet doth remembrance, like a sovereign prince,
 For you a stately gallery maintain
 Of gay or tragic pictures. You have seen,
 Have acted, suffered, travelled far, observed
 With no incurious eye ; and books are yours,
 Within whose silent chambers treasure lies
 Preserved from age to age ; more precious far
 Than that accumulated store of gold
 And orient gems, which, for a day of need,
 The Sultan hides deep in ancestral tombs.
 These hoards of truth you can unlock at will :
 And music waits upon your skilful touch,
 Sounds which the wandering shepherd from these
 heights

Hears, and forgets his purpose ;—furnished thus,
 How can you droop, if willing to be upraised !

A piteous lot it were to flee from Man—
 Yet not rejoice in Nature. He, whose hours
 Are by domestic pleasures uncaressed
 And unenlivened ; who exists whole years
 Apart from benefits received or done
 'Mid the transactions of the bustling crowd ;
 Who neither hears, nor feels a wish to hear,
 Of the world's interests—such a one hath need
 Of a quick fancy, and an active heart,
 That, for the day's consumption, books may yield
 Food not unwholesome ; earth and air correct

His morbid humour, with delight supplied
 Or solace, varying as the seasons change.
 —Truth has her pleasure-grounds, her haunts of
 ease

And easy contemplation ; gay parterres,
 And labyrinthine walks, her sunny glades
 And shady groves in studied contrast—each,
 For recreation, leading into each :
 These may he range, if willing to partake
 Their soft indulgences, and in due time
 May issue thence, recruited for the tasks
 And course of service Truth requires from those
 Who tend her altars, wait upon her throne,
 And guard her fortresses. Who thinks, and feels,
 And recognises ever and anon
 The breeze of nature stirring in his soul,
 Why need such man go desperately astray,
 And nurse ‘ the dreadful appetite of death ? ’
 If fired with systems, each in its degree
 Substantial, and all crumbling in their turn,
 Let him build systems of his own, and smile
 At the fond work, demolished with a touch ;
 If unreligious, let him be at once
 Among ten thousand innocents, enrolled
 A pupil in the many-chambered school,
 Where superstition weaves her airy dreams.

Life’s autumn past, I stand on winter’s verge ;
 And daily lose what I desire to keep :
 Yet rather would I instantly decline
 To the traditionary sympathies
 Of a most rustic ignorance, and take
 A fearful apprehension from the owl
 Or death-watch : and as readily rejoice,
 If two auspicious magpies crossed my way ;—
 To this would rather bend than see and hear
 The repetitions wearisome of sense,
 Where soul is dead, and feeling hath no place ;
 Where knowledge, ill begun in cold remark
 On outward things, with formal inference ends ;
 Or, if the mind turn inward, she recoils
 At once—or, not recoiling, is perplexed—
 Lost in a gloom of uninspired research ;
 Meanwhile, the heart within the heart, the seat
 Where peace and happy consciousness should
 dwell,
 On its own axis restlessly revolving,
 Seeks, yet can nowhere find, the light of truth.

Upon the breast of new-created earth
 Man walked ; and when and wheresoe’er he moved,
 Alone or mated, solitude was not.
 He heard, borne on the wind, the articulate voice
 Of God ; and Angels to his sight appeared

Crowning the glorious hills of paradise ;
 Or through the groves gliding like morning mist
 Enkindled by the sun. He sate—and talked
 With winged Messengers ; who daily brought
 To his small island in the ethereal deep
 Tidings of joy and love.—From those pure heights
 (Whether of actual vision, sensible
 To sight and feeling, or that in this sort
 Have condescendingly been shadowed forth
 Communications spiritually maintained,
 And intuitions moral and divine)
 Fell Human-kind—to banishment condemned
 That flowing years repealed not : and distress
 And grief spread wide ; but Man escaped the doom
 Of destitution ;—solitude was not.
 —Jehovah—shapeless Power above all Powers,
 Single and one, the omnipresent God,
 By vocal utterance, or blaze of light,
 Or cloud of darkness, localised in heaven ;
 On earth, enshrined within the wandering ark ;
 Or, out of Sion, thundering from his throne
 Between the Cherubim—on the chosen Race
 Showered miracles, and ceased not to dispense
 Judgments, that filled the land from age to age
 With hope, and love, and gratitude, and fear ;
 And with amazement smote ;—thereby to assert
 His scorned, or unacknowledged, sovereignty.
 And when the One, ineffable of name,
 Of nature indivisible, withdrew
 From mortal adoration or regard,
 Not then was Deity engulfed ; nor Man,
 The rational creature, left, to feel the weight
 Of his own reason, without sense or thought *
 Of higher reason and a purer will,
 To benefit and bless, through mightier power :—
 Whether the Persian—zealous to reject
 Altar and image, and the inclusive walls
 And roofs of temples built by human hands—
 To loftiest heights ascending, from their tops,
 With myrtle-wreathed tiara on his brow,
 Presented sacrifice to moon and stars,
 And to the winds and mother elements,
 And the whole circle of the heavens, for him
 A sensitive existence, and a God,
 With lifted hands invoked, and songs of praise :
 Or, less reluctantly to bonds of sense
 Yielding his soul, the Babylonian framed
 For influence undefined a personal shape ;
 And, from the plain, with toil immense, upreared
 Tower eight times planted on the top of tower,
 That Belus, nightly to his splendid couch
 Descending, there might rest ; upon that height
 Pure and serene, diffused—to overlook
 Winding Euphrates, and the city vast

Of his devoted worshippers, far-stretched,
With grove and field and garden interspersed ;
Their town, and foodful region for support
Against the pressure of beleaguering war.

Chaldean Shepherds, ranging trackless fields,
Beneath the concave of unclouded skies
Spread like a sea, in boundless solitude,
Looked on the polar star, as on a guide
And guardian of their course, that never closed
His stedfast eye. The planetary Five
With a submissive reverence they beheld ;
Watched, from the centre of their sleeping flocks,
Those radiant Mercuries, that seemed to move
Carrying through ether, in perpetual round,
Decrees and resolutions of the Gods ;
And, by their aspects, signifying works
Of dim futurity, to Man revealed.
—The imaginative faculty was lord
Of observations natural ; and, thus
Led on, those shepherds made report of stars
In set rotation passing to and fro,
Between the orbs of our apparent sphere
And its invisible counterpart, adorned
With answering constellations, under earth,
Removed from all approach of living sight
But present to the dead ; who, so they deemed,
Like those celestial messengers beheld
All accidents, and judges were of all.

The lively Grecian, in a land of hills,
Rivers and fertile plains, and sounding shores,—
Under a cope of sky more variable,
Could find commodious place for every God,
Promptly received, as prodigally brought,
From the surrounding countries, at the choice
Of all adventurers. With unrivalled skill,
As nicest observation furnished hints
For studious fancy, his quick hand bestowed
On fluent operations a fixed shape ;
Metal or stone, idolatrously served.
And yet—triumphant o'er this pompous show
Of art, this palpable array of sense,
On every side encountered ; in despite
Of the gross fictions chanted in the streets
By wandering Rhapsodists ; and in contempt
Of doubt and bold denial hourly urged
Amid the wrangling schools—a SPIRIT hung,
Beautiful region ! o'er thy towns and farms,
Statues and temples, and memorial tombs ;
And emanations were perceived ; and acts
Of immortality, in Nature's course,
Exemplified by mysteries, that were felt
As bonds, on grave philosopher imposed

And armed warrior ; and in every grove
A gay or pensive tenderness prevailed,
When piety more awful had relaxed.
—‘ Take, running river, take these locks of mine’—
Thus would the Votary say—‘ this severed hair,
‘ My vow fulfilling, do I here present,
‘ Thankful for my beloved child’s return.
‘ Thy banks, Cephissus, he again hath trod,
‘ Thy murmurs heard ; and drunk the crystal lymph
‘ With which thou dost refresh the thirsty lip,
‘ And, all day long, moisten these flowery fields !’
And doubtless, sometimes, when the hair was shed
Upon the flowing stream, a thought arose
Of Life continuous, Being unimpaired ;
That hath been, is, and where it was and is
There shall endure,—existence unexposed
To the blind walk of mortal accident ;
From diminution safe and weakening age ;
While man grows old, and dwindles, and decays ;
And countless generations of mankind
Depart ; and leave no vestige where they trod.

We live by Admiration, Hope, and Love ;
And, even as these are well and wisely fixed,
In dignity of being we ascend.
But what is error ?”—“ Answer he who can !”
The Sceptic somewhat haughtily exclaimed :
“ Love, Hope, and Admiration—are they not
Mad Fancy’s favourite vassals ? Does not life
Use them, full oft, as pioneers to ruin,
Guides to destruction ? Is it well to trust
Imagination’s light when reason’s fails,
The unguarded taper where the guarded faints !
—Stoop from those heights, and soberly declare
What error is ; and, of our errors, which
Doth most debase the mind ; the genuine seats
Of power, where are they ? Who shall regulate,
With truth, the scale of intellectual rank ?”

“ Methinks,” persuasively the Sage replied,
“ That for this arduous office you possess
Some rare advantages. Your early days
A grateful recollection must supply
Of much exalted good by Heaven vouchsafed
To dignify the humblest state.—Your voice
Hath, in my hearing, often testified
That poor men’s children, they, and they alone,
By their condition taught, can understand
The wisdom of the prayer that daily asks
For daily bread. A consciousness is yours
How feelingly religion may be learned
In smoky cabins, from a mother’s tongue—
Heard while the dwelling vibrates to the din
Of the contiguous torrent, gathering strength

At every moment—and, with strength, increase
 Of fury; or, while snow is at the door,
 Assaulting and defending, and the wind,
 A sightless labourer, whistles at his work—
 Fearful; but resignation tempers fear,
 And piety is sweet to infant minds.
 —The Shepherd-lad, that in the sunshine carves,
 On the green turf, a dial—to divide
 The silent hours; and who to that report
 Can portion out his pleasures, and adapt,
 Throughout a long and lonely summer's day
 His round of pastoral duties, is not left
 With less intelligence for *moral* things
 Of gravest import. Early he perceives,
 Within himself, a measure and a rule,
 Which to the sun of truth he can apply,
 That shines for him, and shines for all mankind.
 Experience daily fixing his regards
 On nature's wants, he knows how few they are,
 And where they lie, how answered and appeased.
 This knowledge ample recompense affords
 For manifold privations; he refers
 His notions to this standard; on this rock
 Rests his desires; and hence, in after life,
 Soul-strengthening patience, and sublime content.
 Imagination—not permitted here
 To waste her powers, as in the worldling's mind,
 On fickle pleasures, and superfluous cares,
 And trivial ostentation—is left free
 And puissant to range the solemn walks
 Of time and nature, girded by a zone
 That, while it binds, invigorates and supports.
 Acknowledge, then, that whether by the side
 Of his poor hut, or on the mountain top,
 Or in the cultured field, a Man so bred
 (Take from him what you will upon the score
 Of ignorance or illusion) lives and breathes
 For noble purposes of mind: his heart
 Beats to the heroic song of ancient days;
 His eye distinguishes, his soul creates.
 And those illusions, which excite the scorn
 Or move the pity of unthinking minds,
 Are they not mainly outward ministers
 Of inward conscience? with whose service charged
 They came and go, appeared and disappear,
 Diverting evil purposes, remorse
 Awakening, chastening an intemperate grief,
 Or pride of heart abating: and, when'er
 For less important ends those phantoms move,
 Who would forbid them, if their presence serve,
 On thinly-peopled mountains and wild heaths,
 Filling a space, else vacant, to exalt
 The forms of Nature, and enlarge her powers?

Once more to distant ages of the world
 Let us revert, and place before our thoughts
 The face which rural solitude might wear
 To the unenlightened swains of pagan Greece.
 —In that fair clime, the lonely herdsman, stretched
 On the soft grass through half a summer's day,
 With music lulled his indolent repose:
 And, in some fit of weariness, if he,
 When his own breath was silent, chanced to hear
 A distant strain, far sweeter than the sounds
 Which his poor skill could make, his fancy fetched,
 Even from the blazing chariot of the sun,
 A beardless Youth, who touched a golden lute,
 And filled the illumined groves with ravishment.
 The nightly hunter, lifting a bright eye
 Up towards the crescent moon, with grateful heart
 Called on the lovely wanderer who bestowed
 That timely light, to share his joyous sport:
 And hence, a beaming Goddess with her Nymphs,
 Across the lawn and through the darksome grove,
 Not unaccompanied with tuneful notes
 By echo multiplied from rock or cave,
 Swept in the storm of chase; as moon and stars
 Glance rapidly along the clouded heaven,
 When winds are blowing strong. The traveller
 slaked

His thirst from rill or gushing fount, and thanked
 The Naiad. Sunbeams, upon distant hills
 Gliding apace, with shadows in their train,
 Might, with small help from fancy, be transformed
 Into fleet Oreads sporting visibly.
 The Zephyrs fanning, as they passed, their wings,
 Lacked not, for love, fair objects whom they wooed
 With gentle whisper. Withered boughs grotesque,
 Stripped of their leaves and twigs by hoary age,
 From depth of shaggy covert peeping forth
 In the low vale, or on steep mountain side;
 And, sometimes, intermixed with stirring horns
 Of the live deer, or goat's depending beard,—
 These were the lurking Satyrs, a wild brood
 Of gamesome Deities; or Pan himself,
 The simple shepherd's awe-inspiring God!"

The strain was aptly chosen; and I could mark
 Its kindly influence, o'er the yielding brow
 Of our Companion, gradually diffused;
 While, listening, he had paced the noiseless turf,
 Like one whose untired ear a murmuring stream
 Detains; but tempted now to interpose,
 He with a smile exclaimed:—

"Tis well you speak

At a safe distance from our native land,
 And from the mansions where our youth was
 taught.

The true descendants of those godly men
 Who swept from Scotland, in a flame of zeal,
 Shrine, altar, image, and the massy piles
 That harboured them,—the souls retaining yet
 The churlish features of that after-race
 Who fled to woods, caverns, and jutting rocks,
 In deadly scorn of superstitious rites,
 Or what their scruples construed to be such—
 How, think you, would they tolerate this scheme
 Of fine propensities, that tends, if urged
 Far as it might be urged, to sow afresh
 The weeds of Romish phantasy, in vain
 Uprooted; would re-consecrate our wells
 To good Saint Fillan and to fair Saint Anne;
 And from long banishment recal Saint Giles,
 To watch again with tutelary love
 O'er stately Edinburgh throned on crags?
 A blessed restoration, to behold
 The patron, on the shoulders of his priests,
 Once more parading through her crowded streets
 Now simply guarded by the sober powers
 Of science, and philosophy, and sense!"

This answer followed.—"You have turned my thoughts

Upon our brave Progenitors, who rose
 Against idolatry with warlike mind,
 And shrunk from vain observances, to lurk
 In woods, and dwell under impending rocks
 Ill-sheltered, and oft wanting fire and food;
 Why?—for this very reason that they felt,
 And did acknowledge, wheresoe'er they moved,
 A spiritual presence, oft-times misconceived,
 But still a high dependence, a divine
 Bounty and government, that filled their hearts
 With joy, and gratitude, and fear, and love;
 And from their fervent lips drew hymns of praise,
 That through the desert rang. Though favoured
 less,

Far less, than these, yet such, in their degree,
 Were those bewildered Pagans of old time.
 Beyond their own poor natures and above
 They looked; were humbly thankful for the good
 Which the warm sun solicited, and earth
 Bestowed; were glad some,—and their moral sense
 They fortified with reverence for the Gods;
 And they had hopes that overstepped the Grave.

Now, shall our great Discoverers," he exclaimed,
 Raising his voice triumphantly, "obtain
 From sense and reason less than these obtained,
 Though far misled? Shall men for whom our age
 Unbaffled powers of vision hath prepared,
 To explore the world without and world within,

Be joyless as the blind? Ambitious spirits—
 Whom earth, at this late season, hath produced
 To regulate the moving spheres, and weigh
 The planets in the hollow of their hand;
 And they who rather dive than soar, whose pains
 Have solved the elements, or analysed
 The thinking principle—shall they in fact
 Prove a degraded Race? and what avails
 Renown, if their presumption make them such?
 Oh! there is laughter at their work in heaven!
 Inquire of ancient Wisdom; go, demand
 Of mighty Nature, if 'twas ever meant
 That we should pry far off yet be unraised;
 That we should pore, and dwindle as we pore,
 Viewing all objects unremittingly
 In disconnexion dead and spiritless;
 And still dividing, and dividing still,
 Break down all grandeur, still unsatisfied
 With the perverse attempt, while littleness
 May yet become more little; waging thus
 An impious warfare with the very life
 Of our own souls!

And if indeed there be
 An all-pervading Spirit, upon whom
 Our dark foundations rest, could he design
 That this magnificent effect of power,
 The earth we tread, the sky that we behold
 By day, and all the pomp which night reveals;
 That these—and that superior mystery
 Our vital frame, so fearfully devised,
 And the dread soul within it—should exist
 Only to be examined, pondered, searched,
 Probed, vexed, and criticised?—Accuse me not
 Of arrogance, unknown Wanderer as I am,
 If, having walked with Nature threescore years,
 And offered, far as frailty would allow,
 My heart a daily sacrifice to Truth,
 I now affirm of Nature and of Truth,
 Whom I have served, that their DIVINITY
 Revolts, offended at the ways of men
 Swayed by such motives, to such ends employed;
 Philosophers, who, though the human soul
 Be of a thousand faculties composed,
 And twice ten thousand interests, do yet prize
 This soul, and the transcendent universe,
 No more than as a mirror that reflects
 To proud Self-love her own intelligence;
 That one, poor, finite object, in the abyss
 Of infinite Being, twinkling restlessly!

Nor higher place can be assigned to him
 And his compeers—the laughing Sage of France.—
 Crowned was he, if my memory do not err,
 With laurel planted upon hoary hairs,

In sign of conquest by his wit achieved
 And benefits his wisdom had conferred ;
 His stooping body tottered with wreaths of flowers
 Opprest, far less becoming ornaments
 Than Spring oft twines about a mouldering tree ;
 Yet so it pleased a fond, a vain, old Man,
 And a most frivolous people. Him I mean
 Who penned, to ridicule confiding faith,
 This sorry Legend ; which by chance we found
 Piled in a nook, through malice, as might seem,
 Among more innocent rubbish."—Speaking thus,
 With a brief notice when, and how, and where,
 We had espied the book, he drew it forth ;
 And courteously, as if the act removed,
 At once, all traces from the good Man's heart
 Of unbenign aversion or contempt,
 Restored it to its owner. "Gentle Friend,"
 Herewith he grasped the Solitary's hand,
 "You have known lights and guides better than these.
 Ah ! let not aught amiss within dispose
 A noble mind to practise on herself,
 And tempt opinion to support the wrongs
 Of passion : whatsoe'er be felt or feared,
 From higher judgment-seats make no appeal
 To lower : can you question that the soul
 Inherits an allegiance, not by choice
 To be cast off, upon an oath proposed
 By each new upstart notion ? In the ports
 Of levity no refuge can be found,
 No shelter, for a spirit in distress.
 He, who by wilful disesteem of life
 And proud insensibility to hope,
 Affronts the eye of Solitude, shall learn
 That her mild nature can be terrible ;
 That neither she nor Silence lack the power
 To avenge their own insulted majesty.

O blest seclusion ! when the mind admits
 The law of duty ; and can therefore move
 Through each vicissitude of loss and gain,
 Linked in entire complacency with her choice ;
 When youth's presumptuousness is mellowed down,
 And manhood's vain anxiety dismissed ;
 When wisdom shows her seasonable fruit,
 Upon the boughs of sheltering leisure hung
 In sober plenty ; when the spirit stoops
 To drink with gratitude the crystal stream
 Of unreprieved enjoyment ; and is pleased
 To muse ; and be saluted by the air
 Of meek repentance, wafting wall-flower scents
 From out the crumbling ruins of fallen pride
 And chambers of transgression, now forlorn.
 O, calm contented days, and peaceful nights !
 Who, when such good can be obtained, would strive

To reconcile his manhood to a couch
 Soft, as may seem, but, under that disguise,
 Stuffed with the thorny substance of the past
 For fixed annoyance ; and full oft beset
 With floating dreams, black and disconsolate,
 The vapoury phantoms of futurity ?

Within the soul a faculty abides,
 That with interpositions, which would hide
 And darken, so can deal that they become
 Contingencies of pomp ; and serve to exalt
 Her native brightness. As the ample moon,
 In the deep stillness of a summer even
 Rising behind a thick and lofty grove,
 Burns, like an unconsuming fire of light,
 In the green trees ; and, kindling on all sides
 Their leafy umbrage, turns the dusky veil
 Into a substance glorious as her own,
 Yea, with her own incorporated, by power
 Capacious and serene. Like power abides
 In man's celestial spirit ; virtue thus
 Sets forth and magnifies herself ; thus feeds
 A calm, a beautiful, and silent fire,
 From the encumbrances of mortal life,
 From error, disappointment—nay, from guilt ;
 And sometimes, so relenting justice wills,
 From palpable oppressions of despair."

The Solitary by these words was touched
 With manifest emotion, and exclaimed ;
 "But how begin ! and whence ?—The Mind is
 free—
 Resolve," the haughty Moralist would say,
 'This single act is all that we demand.'
 Alas ! such wisdom bids a creature fly
 Whose very sorrow is, that time hath shorn
 His natural wings !—To friendship let him turn
 For succour ; but perhaps he sits alone
 On stormy waters, tossed in a little boat
 That holds but him, and can contain no more !
 Religion tells of amity sublime
 Which no condition can preclude ; of One
 Who sees all suffering, comprehends all wants,
 All weakness fathoms, can supply all needs :
 But is that bounty absolute ?—His gifts,
 Are they not, still, in some degree, rewards
 For acts of service ? Can his love extend
 To hearts that own not him ? Will showers of grace,
 When in the sky no promise may be seen,
 Fall to refresh a parched and withered land ?
 Or shall the groaning Spirit cast her load
 At the Redeemer's feet ?"

In rueful tone,
 With some impatience in his mien, he spake :

Back to my mind rushed all that had been urged
To calm the Sufferer when his story closed ;
I looked for counsel as unbending now ;
But a discriminating sympathy
Stooped to this apt reply :—

“As men from men

Do, in the constitution of their souls,
Differ, by mystery not to be explained ;
And as we fall by various ways, and sink
One deeper than another, self-condemned,
Through manifold degrees of guilt and shame ;
So manifold and various are the ways
Of restoration, fashioned to the steps
Of all infirmity, and tending all
To the same point, attainable by all—
Peace in ourselves, and union with our God.
For you, assuredly, a hopeful road
Lies open : we have heard from you a voice
At every moment softened in its course
By tenderness of heart ; have seen your eye,
Even like an altar lit by fire from heaven,
Kindle before us.—Your discourse this day,
That, like the fabled Lethe, wished to flow
In creeping sadness, through oblivious shades
Of death and night, has caught at every turn
The colours of the sun. Access for you
Is yet preserved to principles of truth,
Which the imaginative Will upholds
In seats of wisdom, not to be approached
By the inferior Faculty that moulds,
With her minute and speculative pains,
Opinion, ever changing !

I have seen

A curious child, who dwelt upon a tract
Of inland ground, applying to his ear
The convolutions of a smooth-lipped shell ;
To which, in silence hushed, his very soul
Listened intensely ; and his countenance soon
Brightened with joy ; for from within were heard
Murmurings, whereby the monitor expressed
Mysterious union with its native sea.
Even such a shell the universe itself
Is to the ear of Faith ; and there are times,
I doubt not, when to you it doth impart
Authentic tidings of invisible things ;
Of ebb and flow, and ever-during power ;
And central peace, subsisting at the heart
Of endless agitation. Here you stand,
Adore, and worship, when you know it not ;
Pious beyond the intention of your thought ;
Devout above the meaning of your will.
—Yes, you have felt, and may not cease to feel.
The estate of man would be indeed forlorn
If false conclusions of the reasoning power

Made the eye blind, and closed the passages
Through which the ear converses with the heart.
Has not the soul, the being of your life,
Received a shock of awful consciousness,
In some calm season, when these lofty rocks
At night's approach bring down the unclouded sky,
To rest upon their circumambient walls ;
A temple framing of dimensions vast,
And yet not too enormous for the sound
Of human anthems,—choral song, or burst
Sublime of instrumental harmony,
To glorify the Eternal ! What if these
Did never break the stillness that prevails
Here,—if the solemn nightingale be mute,
And the soft woodlark here did never chant
Her vespers,—Nature fails not to provide
Impulse and utterance. The whispering air
Sends inspiration from the shadowy heights,
And blind recesses of the caverned rocks ;
The little rills, and waters numberless,
Inaudible by daylight, blend their notes
With the loud streams : and often, at the hour
When issue forth the first pale stars, is heard,
Within the circuit of this fabric huge,
One voice—the solitary raven, flying
Athwart the concave of the dark blue dome,
Unseen, perchance above all power of sight—
An iron knell ! with echoes from afar
Faint—and still fainter—as the cry, with which
The wanderer accompanies her flight
Through the calm region, fades upon the ear,
Diminishing by distance till it seemed
To expire ; yet from the abyss is caught again,
And yet again recovered !

But descending

From these imaginative heights, that yield
Far-stretching views into eternity,
Acknowledge that to Nature's humbler power
Your cherished sullenness is forced to bend
Even here, where her amenities are sown
With sparing hand. Then trust yourself abroad
To range her blooming bowers, and spacious fields,
Where on the labours of the happy throng
She smiles, including in her wide embrace
City, and town, and tower,—and sea with ships
Sprinkled ;—be our Companion while we track
Her rivers populous with gliding life ;
While, free as air, o'er printless sands we march,
Or pierce the gloom of her majestic woods ;
Roaming, or resting under grateful shade
In peace and meditative cheerfulness ;
Where living things, and things inanimate,
Do speak, at Heaven's command, to eye and ear,
And speak to social reason's inner sense,

With inarticulate language.

For, the Man—

Who, in this spirit, communes with the Forms
Of nature, who with understanding heart
Both knows and loves such objects as excite
No morbid passions, no inquietude,
No vengeance, and no hatred—needs must feel
The joy of that pure principle of love
So deeply, that, unsatisfied with aught
Less pure and exquisite, he cannot choose
But seek for objects of a kindred love
In fellow-natures and a kindred joy.
Accordingly he by degrees perceives
His feelings of aversion softened down ;
A holy tenderness pervade his frame.
His sanity of reason not impaired,
Say rather, all his thoughts now flowing clear,
From a clear fountain flowing, he looks round
And seeks for good ; and finds the good he seeks :
Until abhorrence and contempt are things
He only knows by name ; and, if he hear,
From other mouths, the language which they speak,
He is compassionate ; and has no thought,
No feeling, which can overcome his love.

And further ; by contemplating these Forms
In the relations which they bear to man,
He shall discern, how, through the various means
Which silently they yield, are multiplied
The spiritual presences of absent things.
Trust me, that for the instructed, time will come
When they shall meet no object but may teach
Some acceptable lesson to their minds
Of human suffering, or of human joy.
So shall they learn, while all things speak of man,
Their duties from all forms ; and general laws,
And local accidents, shall tend alike
To rouse, to urge ; and, with the will, confer
The ability to spread the blessings wide
Of true philanthropy. The light of love
Not failing, perseverance from their steps
Departing not, for them shall be confirmed
The glorious habit by which sense is made
Subservient still to moral purposes,
Auxiliary to divine. That change shall clothe
The naked spirit, ceasing to deplore
The burthen of existence. Science then
Shall be a precious visitant ; and then,
And only then, be worthy of her name :
For then her heart shall kindle ; her dull eye,
Dull and inanimate, no more shall hang
Chained to its object in brute slavery ;
But taught with patient interest to watch
The processes of things, and serve the cause

Of order and distinctness, not for this
Shall it forget that its most noble use,
Its most illustrious province, must be found
In furnishing clear guidance, a support
Not treacherous, to the mind's *excursive* power.
—So build we up the Being that we are ;
Thus deeply drinking-in the soul of things,
We shall be wise perforce ; and, while inspired
By choice, and conscious that the Will is free,
Shall move unswerving, even as if impelled
By strict necessity, along the path
Of order and of good. Whate'er we see,
Or feel, shall tend to quicken and refine ;
Shall fix, in calmer seats of moral strength,
Earthly desires ; and raise, to loftier heights
Of divine love, our intellectual soul."

Here closed the Sage that eloquent harangue,
Poured forth with fervour in continuous stream,
Such as, remote, mid savage wilderness,
An Indian Chief discharges from his breast
Into the hearing of assembled tribes,
In open circle seated round, and hushed
As the unbreathing air, when not a leaf
Stirs in the mighty woods.—So did he speak :
The words he uttered shall not pass away
Dispersed, like music that the wind takes up
By snatches, and lets fall, to be forgotten ;
No—they sank into me, the bounteous gift
Of one whom time and nature had made wise,
Gracing his doctrine with authority
Which hostile spirits silently allow ;
Of one accustomed to desires that feed
On fruitage gathered from the tree of life ;
To hopes on knowledge and experience built ;
Of one in whom persuasion and belief
Had ripened into faith, and faith become
A passionate intuition ; whence the Soul,
Though bound to earth by ties of pity and love,
From all injurious servitude was free.

The Sun, before his place of rest were reached,
Had yet to travel far, but unto us,
To us who stood low in that hollow dell,
He had become invisible,—a pomp
Leaving behind of yellow radiance spread
Over the mountain sides, in contrast bold
With ample shadows, seemingly, no less
Than those resplendent lights, his rich bequest ;
A dispensation of his evening power.
—Adown the path that from the glen had led
The funeral train, the Shepherd and his Mate
Were seen descending :—forth to greet them ran
Our little Page : the rustic pair approach ;

And in the Matron's countenance may be read
Plain indication that the words, which told
How that neglected Pensioner was sent
Before his time into a quiet grave,
Had done to her humanity no wrong :
But we are kindly welcomed—promptly served
With ostentatious zeal.—Along the floor

Of the small Cottage in the lonely Dell
A grateful couch was spread for our repose ;
Where, in the guise of mountaineers, we lay,
Stretched upon fragrant heath, and lulled by sound
Of far-off torrents charming the still night,
And, to tired limbs and over-busy thoughts,
Inviting sleep and soft forgetfulness.

BOOK FIFTH.

THE PASTOR.

ARGUMENT.

Farewell to the Valley—Reflections—A large and populous Vale described—The Pastor's Dwelling, and some account of him—Church and Monuments—The Solitary musing, and where—Roused—In the Churchyard the Solitary communicates the thoughts which had recently passed through his mind—Lofty tone of the Wanderer's discourse of yesterday adverted to—Rite of Baptism, and the professions accompanying it, contrasted with the real state of human life—Apology for the Rite—Inconsistency of the best men—Acknowledgment that practice falls far below the injunctions of duty as existing in the mind—General complaint of a falling-off in the value of life after the time of youth—Outward appearances of content and happiness in degree illusive—Pastor approaches—Appeal made to him—His answer—Wanderer in sympathy with him—Suggestion that the least ambitious enquirers may be most free from error—The Pastor is desired to give some portraits of the living or dead from his own observation of life among these Mountains—and for what purpose—Pastor consents—Mountain cottage—Excellent qualities of its Inhabitants—Solitary expresses his pleasure ; but denies the praise of virtue to worth of this kind—Feelings of the Priest before he enters upon his account of persons interred in the Churchyard—Graves of unbaptized Infants—Funeral and sepulchral observances, whence—Ecclesiastical Establishments, whence derived—Profession of belief in the doctrine of Immortality.

“FAREWELL, deep Valley, with thy one rude
House,

And its small lot of life-supporting fields,
And guardian rocks !—Farewell, attractive seat !
To the still influx of the morning light
Open, and day's pure cheerfulness, but veiled
From human observation, as if yet
Primeval forests wrapped thee round with dark
Impenetrable shade ; once more farewell,
Majestic circuit, beautiful abyss,
By Nature destined from the birth of things
For quietness profound !”

Upon the side

Of that brown ridge, sole outlet of the vale
Which foot of boldest stranger would attempt,
Lingering behind my comrades, thus I breathed
A parting tribute to a spot that seemed
Like the fixed centre of a troubled world.
Again I halted with reverted eyes ;
The chain that would not slacken, was at length
Snapt,—and, pursuing leisurely my way,
How vain, thought I, is it by change of place
To seek that comfort which the mind denies ;
Yet trial and temptation oft are shunned
Wisely ; and by such tenure do we hold,
Frail life's possessions, that even they whose fate
Yields no peculiar reason of complaint
Might, by the promise that is here, be won
To steal from active duties, and embrace
Obscurity, and undisturbed repose.
—Knowledge, methinks, in these disordered times,
Should be allowed a privilege to have
Her anchorites, like piety of old ;
Men, who, from faction sacred, and unstained
By war, might, if so minded, turn aside
Uncensured, and subsist, a scattered few
Living to God and nature, and content
With that communion. Consecrated be
The spots where such abide ! But happier still
The Man, whom, furthermore, a hope attends
That meditation and research may guide
His privacy to principles and powers
Discovered or invented ; or set forth,
Through his acquaintance with the ways of truth,
In lucid order ; so that, when his course
Is run, some faithful eulogist may say,
He sought not praise, and praise did overlook
His unobtrusive merit ; but his life,
Sweet to himself, was exercised in good
That shall survive his name and memory.

Acknowledgments of gratitude sincere
Accompanied these musings ; fervent thanks

For my own peaceful lot and happy choice ;
 A choice that from the passions of the world
 Withdrew, and fixed me in a still retreat ;
 Sheltered, but not to social duties lost,
 Secluded, but not buried ; and with song
 Cheering my days, and with industrious thought ;
 With the ever-welcome company of books ;
 With virtuous friendship's soul-sustaining aid,
 And with the blessings of domestic love.

Thus occupied in mind I paced along,
 Following the rugged road, by sledge or wheel
 Worn in the moorland, till I overtook
 My two Associates, in the morning sunshine
 Halting together on a rocky knoll,
 Whence the bare road descended rapidly
 To the green meadows of another vale.

Here did our pensive Host put forth his hand
 In sign of farewell. "Nay," the old Man said,
 "The fragrant air its coolness still retains ;
 The herds and flocks are yet abroad to crop
 The dewy grass ; you cannot leave us now,
 We must not part at this inviting hour." He yielded, though reluctant ; for his mind
 Instinctively disposed him to retire
 To his own covert ; as a billow, heaved
 Upon the beach, rolls back into the sea.
 —So we descend : and winding round a rock
 Attain a point that showed the valley—stretched
 In length before us ; and, not distant far,
 Upon a rising ground a grey church-tower,
 Whose battlements were screened by tufted trees.
 And towards a crystal Mere, that lay beyond
 Among steep hills and woods embosomed, flowed
 A copious stream with boldly-winding course ;
 Here traceable, there hidden—there again
 To sight restored, and glittering in the sun.
 On the stream's bank, and every where, appeared
 Fair dwellings, single, or in social knots ;
 Some scattered o'er the level, others perched
 On the hill sides, a cheerful quiet scene,
 Now in its morning purity arrayed.

"As 'mid some happy valley of the Alps,"
 Said I, "once happy, ere tyrannic power,
 Wantonly breaking in upon the Swiss,
 Destroyed their unoffending commonwealth,
 A popular equality reigns here,
 Save for yon stately House beneath whose roof
 A rural lord might dwell."—"No feudal pomp,
 Or power," replied the Wanderer, "to that House
 Belongs, but there in his allotted Home
 Abides, from year to year, a genuine Priest,

The shepherd of his flock ; or, as a king
 Is styled, when most affectionately praised,
 The father of his people. Such is he ;
 And rich and poor, and young and old, rejoice
 Under his spiritual sway. He hath vouchsafed
 To me some portion of a kind regard ;
 And something also of his inner mind
 Hath he imparted—but I speak of him
 As he is known to all.

The calm delights
 Of unambitious piety he chose,
 And learning's solid dignity ; though born
 Of knightly race, nor wanting powerful friends.
 Hither, in prime of manhood, he withdrew
 From academic bowers. He loved the spot—
 Who does not love his native soil ?—he prized
 The ancient rural character, composed
 Of simple manners, feelings unsuppressed
 And undisguised, and strong and serious thought ;
 A character reflected in himself,
 With such embellishment as well beseems
 His rank and sacred function. This deep vale
 Winds far in reaches hidden from our sight,
 And one a turreted manorial hall
 Adorns, in which the good Man's ancestors
 Have dwelt through ages—Patrons of this Cure.
 To them, and to his own judicious pains,
 The Vicar's dwelling, and the whole domain,
 Owes that presiding aspect which might well
 Attract your notice ; statelier than could else
 Have been bestowed, through course of common
 chance,
 On an unwealthy mountain Benefice."

This said, oft pausing, we pursued our way ;
 Nor reached the village-churchyard till the sun
 Travelling at steadier pace than ours, had risen
 Above the summits of the highest hills,
 And round our path darted oppressive beams.

As chanced, the portals of the sacred Pile
 Stood open ; and we entered. On my frame,
 At such transition from the fervid air,
 A grateful coolness fell, that seemed to strike
 The heart, in concert with that temperate awe
 And natural reverence which the place inspired.
 Not raised in nice proportions was the pile,
 But large and massy ; for duration built ;
 With pillars crowded, and the roof upheld
 By naked rafters intricately crossed,
 Like leafless underboughs, in some thick wood,
 All withered by the depth of shade above.
 Admonitory texts inscribed the walls,
 Each, in its ornamental scroll, enclosed ;

Each also crowned with winged heads—a pair
Of rudely-painted Cherubim. The floor
Of nave and aisle, in unpretending guise,
Was occupied by oaken benches ranged
In seemly rows; the chancel only showed
Some vain distinctions, marks of earthly state
By immemorial privilege allowed;
Though with the Encincture's special sanctity
But ill according. An heraldic shield,
Varying its tincture with the changeful light,
Imbued the altar-window; fixed aloft
A faded hatchment hung, and one by time
Yet undiscoloured. A capacious pew
Of sculptured oak stood here, with drapery lined;
And marble monuments were here displayed
Thronging the walls; and on the floor beneath
Sepulchral stones appeared, with emblems graven
And foot-worn epitaphs, and some with small
And shining effigies of brass inlaid.

The tribute by these various records claimed,
Duly we paid, each after each, and read
The ordinary chronicle of birth,
Office, alliance, and promotion—all
Ending in dust; of upright magistrates,
Grave doctors strenuous for the mother-church,
And uncorrupted senators, alike
To king and people true. A brazen plate,
Not easily deciphered, told of one
Whose course of earthly honour was begun
In quality of page among the train
Of the eighth Henry, when he crossed the seas
His royal state to show, and prove his strength
In tournament, upon the fields of France.
Another tablet registered the death,
And praised the gallant bearing, of a Knight
Tried in the sea-fights of the second Charles.
Near this brave Knight his Father lay entombed;
And, to the silent language giving voice,
I read,—how in his manhood's earlier day
He, 'mid the afflictions of intestine war
And rightful government subverted, found
One only solace—that he had espoused
A virtuous Lady tenderly beloved
For her benign perfections; and yet more
Endeared to him, for this, that, in her state
Of wedlock richly crowned with Heaven's regard,
She with a numerous issue filled his house,
Who throve, like plants, uninjured by the storm
That laid their country waste. No need to speak
Of less particular notices assigned
To Youth or Maiden gone before their time,
And Matrons and unwedded Sisters old;
Whose charity and goodness were rehearsed

In modest panegyric.

“These dim lines,
What would they tell?” said I,—but, from the task
Of puzzling out that faded narrative,
With whisper soft my venerable Friend
Called me; and, looking down the darksome aisle,
I saw the Tenant of the lonely vale
Standing apart; with curvèd arm reclined
On the baptismal font; his pallid face
Upturned, as if his mind were rapt, or lost
In some abstraction;—gracefully he stood,
The semblance bearing of a sculptured form
That leans upon a monumental urn
In peace, from morn to night, from year to year.

Him from that posture did the Sexton rouse;
Who entered, humming carelessly a tune,
Continuation haply of the notes
That had beguiled the work from which he came,
With spade and mattock o'er his shoulder hung;
To be deposited, for future need,
In their appointed place. The pale Recluse
Withdrew; and straight we followed,—to a spot
Where sun and shade were intermixed; for there
A broad oak, stretching forth its leafy arms
From an adjoining pasture, overhung
Small space of that green churchyard with a light
And pleasant awning. On the moss-grown wall
My ancient Friend and I together took
Our seats; and thus the Solitary spake,
Standing before us:—

“Did you note the mien
Of that self-solaced, easy-hearted churl,
Death's hireling, who scoops out his neighbour's
grave,
Or wraps an old acquaintance up in clay,
All unconcerned as he would bind a sheaf,
Or plant a tree. And did you hear his voice?
I was abruptly summoned by the sound
From some affecting images and thoughts,
Which then were silent; but crave utterance now.

Much,” he continued, with dejected look,
“Much, yesterday, was said in glowing phrase
Of our sublime dependencies, and hopes
For future states of being; and the wings
Of speculation, joyfully outspread,
Hovered above our destiny on earth:
But stoop, and place the prospect of the soul
In sober contrast with reality,
And man's substantial life. If this mute earth
Of what it holds could speak, and every grave
Were as a volume, shut, yet capable
Of yielding its contents to eye and ear,

We should recoil, stricken with sorrow and shame,
To see disclosed, by such dread proof, how ill
That which is done accords with what is known
To reason, and by conscience is enjoined ;
How idly, how perversely, life's whole course,
To this conclusion, deviates from the line,
Or of the end stops short, proposed to all
At her aspiring outset.

Mark the babe
Not long accustomed to this breathing world ;
One that hath barely learned to shape a smile,
Though yet irrational of soul, to grasp
With tiny finger—to let fall a tear ;
And, as the heavy cloud of sleep dissolves,
To stretch his limbs, bemocking, as might seem,
The outward functions of intelligent man ;
A grave proficient in amusive feats
Of puppetry, that from the lap declare
His expectations, and announce his claims
To that inheritance which millions rue
That they were ever born to ! In due time
A day of solemn ceremonial comes ;
When they, who for this Minor hold in trust
Rights that transcend the loftiest heritage
Of mere humanity, present their Charge,
For this occasion daintily adorned,
At the baptismal font. And when the pure
And consecrating element hath cleansed
The original stain, the child is there received
Into the second ark, Christ's church, with trust
That he, from wrath redeemed, therein shall float
Over the billows of this troublesome world
To the fair land of everlasting life.
Corrupt affections, covetous desires,
Are all renounced ; high as the thought of man
Can carry virtue, virtue is professed ;
A dedication made, a promise given
For due provision to control and guide,
And unremitting progress to ensure
In holiness and truth."

"You cannot blame,"

Here interposing fervently I said,
"Rites which attest that Man by nature lies
Bedded for good and evil in a gulf
Fearfully low ; nor will your judgment scorn
Those services, whereby attempt is made
To lift the creature toward that eminence
On which, now fallen, erewhile in majesty
He stood ; or if not so, whose top serene
At least he feels 'tis given him to descry ;
Not without aspirations, evermore
Returning, and injunctions from within
Doubt to cast off and weariness ; in trust
That what the Soul perceives, if glory lost,

May be, through pains and persevering hope,
Recovered ; or, if hitherto unknown,
Lies within reach, and one day shall be gained."

"I blame them not," he calmly answered—"no ;
The outward ritual and established forms
With which communities of men invest
These inward feelings, and the aspiring vows
To which the lips give public utterance
Are both a natural process ; and by me
Shall pass uncensured ; though the issue prove,
Bringing from age to age its own reproach,
Incongruous, impotent, and blank.—But, oh !
If to be weak is to be wretched—miserable,
As the lost Angel by a human voice
Hath mournfully pronounced, then, in my mind,
Far better not to move at all than move
By impulse sent from such illusive power,—
That finds and cannot fasten down ; that grasps
And is rejoiced, and loses while it grasps ;
That tempts, emboldens—for a time sustains,
And then betrays ; accuses and inflicts
Remorseless punishment ; and so retreads
The inevitable circle : better far
Than this, to graze the herb in thoughtless peace,
By foresight or remembrance, undisturbed !

Philosophy ! and thou more vaunted name
Religion ! with thy statelier retinue,
Faith, Hope, and Charity—from the visible world
Choose for your emblems whatso'er ye find
Of safest guidance or of firmest trust—
The torch, the star, the anchor ; nor except
The cross itself, at whose unconscious feet
The generations of mankind have knelt
Ruefully seized, and shedding bitter tears,
And through that conflict seeking rest—of you,
High-titled Powers, am I constrained to ask,
Here standing, with the unvoyageable sky
In faint reflection of infinitude
Stretched overhead, and at my pensive feet
A subterranean magazine of bones,
In whose dark vaults my own shall soon be laid,
Where are your triumphs ? your dominion where ?
And in what age admitted and confirmed ?
—Not for a happy land do I enquire,
Island or grove, that hides a blessed few
Who, with obedience willing and sincere,
To your serene authorities conform ;
But whom, I ask, of individual Souls,
Have ye withdrawn from passion's crooked ways,
Inspired, and thoroughly fortified ?—If the heart
Could be inspected to its inmost folds
By sight undazzled with the glare of praise,

Who shall be named—in the resplendent line
Of sages, martyrs, confessors—the man
Whom the best might of faith, wherever fix'd,
For one day's little compass, has preserved
From painful and discreditable shocks
Of contradiction, from some vague desire
Culpably cherished, or corrupt relapse
To some unsanctioned fear?"

"If this be so,
And Man," said I, "be in his noblest shape
Thus pitifully infirm; then, he who made,
And who shall judge the creature, will forgive.
—Yet, in its general tenor, your complaint
Is all too true; and surely not misplaced:
For, from this pregnant spot of ground, such
thoughts

Rise to the notice of a serious mind
By natural exhalation. With the dead
In their repose, the living in their mirth,
Who can reflect, unmoved, upon the round
Of smooth and solemnized complacencies,
By which, on Christian lands, from age to age
Profession mocks performance. Earth is sick,
And Heaven is weary, of the hollow words
Which States and Kingdoms utter when they talk
Of truth and justice. Turn to private life
And social neighbourhood; look we to ourselves;
A light of duty shines on every day
For all; and yet how few are warmed or cheered!
How few who mingle with their fellow-men
And still remain self-governed, and apart,
Like this our honoured Friend; and thence acquire
Right to expect his vigorous decline,
That promises to the end a blest old age!"

"Yet," with a smile of triumph thus exclaimed
The Solitary, "in the life of man,
If to the poetry of common speech
Faith may be given, we see as in a glass
A true reflection of the circling year,
With all its seasons. Grant that Spring is there,
In spite of many a rough untoward blast,
Hopeful and promising with buds and flowers;
Yet where is glowing Summer's long rich day,
That *ought* to follow faithfully expressed?
And mellow Autumn, charged with bounteous fruit,
Where is she imaged? in what favoured clime
Her lavish pomp, and ripe magnificence?
—Yet, while the better part is missed, the worse
In man's autumnal season is set forth
With a resemblance not to be denied,
And that contents him; bows that hear no more
The voice of gladness, less and less supply
Of outward sunshine and internal warmth;

And, with this change, sharp air and falling leaves,
Foretelling aged Winter's desolate sway.

How gay the habitations that bedeck
This fertile valley! Not a house but seems
To give assurance of content within;
Embosomed happiness, and placid love;
As if the sunshine of the day were met
With answering brightness in the hearts of all
Who walk this favoured ground. But chance-
regards,

And notice forced upon incurious ears;
These, if these only, acting in despite
Of the encomiums by my Friend pronounced
On humble life, forbid the judging mind
To trust the smiling aspect of this fair
And noiseless commonwealth. The simple race
Of mountaineers (by nature's self removed
From foul temptations, and by constant care
Of a good shepherd tended as themselves
Do tend their flocks) partake man's general lot
With little mitigation. They escape,
Perchance, the heavier woes of guilt; feel not
The tedium of fantastic idleness:
Yet life, as with the multitude, with them
Is fashioned like an ill-constructed tale;
That on the outset wastes its gay desires,
Its fair adventures, its enlivening hopes,
And pleasant interests—for the sequel leaving
Old things repeated with diminished grace;
And all the laboured novelties at best
Imperfect substitutes, whose use and power
Evince the want and weakness whence they spring."

While in this serious mood we held discourse,
The reverend Pastor toward the church-yard gate
Approached; and, with a mild respectful air
Of native cordiality, our Friend
Advanced to greet him. With a gracious mien
Was he received, and mutual joy prevailed.
Awhile they stood in conference, and I guess
That he, who now upon the mossy wall
Sate by my side, had vanished, if a wish
Could have transferred him to the flying clouds,
Or the least penetrable hiding-place
In his own valley's rocky guardianship.
—For me, I looked upon the pair, well pleased:
Nature had framed them both, and both were marked
By circumstance, with intermixture fine
Of contrast and resemblance. To an oak
Hardy and grand, a weather-beaten oak,
Fresh in the strength and majesty of age,
One might be likened: flourishing appeared,
Though somewhat past the fulness of his prime,

The other—like a stately sycamore,
That spreads, in gentle pomp, its honied shade.

A general greeting was exchanged ; and soon
The Pastor learned that his approach had given
A welcome interruption to discourse
Grave, and in truth too often sad.—“Is Man
A child of hope ? Do generations press
On generations, without progress made ?
Halts the individual, ere his hairs be grey,
Perforce ? Are we a creature in whom good
Preponderates, or evil ? Doth the will
Acknowledge reason’s law ? A living power
Is virtue, or no better than a name,
Fleeting as health or beauty, and unsound ?
So that the only substance which remains,
(For thus the tenor of complaint hath run)
Among so many shadows, are the pains
And penalties of miserable life,
Doomed to decay, and then expire in dust !
—Our cogitations this way have been drawn,
These are the points,” the Wanderer said, “on which
Our inquest turns.—Accord, good Sir ! the light
Of your experience to dispel this gloom :
By your persuasive wisdom shall the heart
That frets, or languishes, be stilled and cheered.”

“Our nature,” said the Priest, in mild reply,
“Angels may weigh and fathom : they perceive,
With undistempered and unclouded spirit,
The object as it is ; but, for ourselves,
That speculative height *we* may not reach.
The good and evil are our own ; and we
Are that which we would contemplate from far.
Knowledge, for us, is difficult to gain—
Is difficult to gain, and hard to keep—
As virtue’s self ; like virtue is beset
With snares ; tried, tempted, subject to decay.
Love, admiration, fear, desire, and hate,
Blind were we without these : through these alone
Are capable to notice or discern
Or to record ; we judge, but cannot be
Indifferent judges. ’Spite of proudest boast,
Reason, best reason, is to imperfect man
An effort only, and a noble aim ;
A crown, an attribute of sovereign power,
Still to be courted—never to be won.
—Look forth, or each man dive into himself ;
What sees he but a creature too perturbed ;
That is transported to excess ; that yearns,
Regrets, or trembles, wrongly, or too much ;
Hopes rashly, in disgust as rash recoils ;
Battens on spleen, or moulders in despair ?
Thus comprehension fails, and truth is missed ;

Thus darkness and delusion round our path
Spread, from disease, whose subtle injury lurks
Within the very faculty of sight.

Yet for the general purposes of faith
In Providence, for solace and support,
We may not doubt that who can best subject
The will to reason’s law, can strictliest live
And act in that obedience, he shall gain
The clearest apprehension of those truths,
Which unassisted reason’s utmost power
Is too infirm to reach. But, waiving this,
And our regards confining within bounds
Of less exalted consciousness, through which
The very multitude are free to range,
We safely may affirm that human life
Is either fair and tempting, a soft scene
Grateful to sight, refreshing to the soul,
Or a forbidden tract of cheerless view ;
Even as the same is looked at, or approached.
Thus, when in changeful April fields are white
With new-fallen snow, if from the sullen north
Your walk conduct you hither, ere the sun
Hath gained his noontide height, this churchyard,
filled

With mounds transversely lying side by side
From east to west, before you will appear
An unilluminated, blank, and dreary, plain,
With more than wintry cheerlessness and gloom
Saddening the heart. Go forward, and look back ;
Look, from the quarter whence the lord of light,
Of life, of love, and gladness doth dispense
His beams ; which, unexcluded in their fall,
Upon the southern side of every grave
Have gently exercised a melting power ;
Then will a vernal prospect greet your eye,
All fresh and beautiful, and green and bright,
Hopeful and cheerful :—vanished is the pall
That overspread and chilled the sacred turf,
Vanished or hidden ; and the whole domain,
To some, too lightly minded, might appear
A meadow carpet for the dancing hours.
—This contrast, not unsuitable to life,
Is to that other state more apposite,
Death and its two-fold aspect ! wintry—one,
Cold, sullen, blank, from hope and joy shut out ;
The other, which the ray divine hath touched,
Replete with vivid promise, bright as spring.”

“We see, then, as we feel,” the Wanderer thus
With a complacent animation spake,
“And in your judgment, Sir ! the mind’s repose
On evidence is not to be ensured
By act of naked reason. Moral truth

Is no mechanic structure, built by rule ;
 And which, once built, retains a stedfast shape
 And undisturbed proportions ; but a thing
 Subject, you deem, to vital accidents ;
 And, like the water-lily, lives and thrives,
 Whose root is fixed in stable earth, whose head
 Floats on the tossing waves. With joy sincere
 I re-salute these sentiments confirmed
 By your authority. But how acquire
 The inward principle that gives effect
 To outward argument ; the passive will
 Meek to admit ; the active energy,
 Strong and unbounded to embrace, and firm
 To keep and cherish ? how shall man unite
 With self-forgetting tenderness of heart
 An earth-despising dignity of soul ?
 Wise in that union, and without it blind !”

“ The way,” said I, “ to court, if not obtain
 The ingenuous mind, apt to be set aright ;
 This, in the lonely dell discoursing, you
 Declared at large ; and by what exercise
 From visible nature, or the inner self
 Power may be trained, and renovation brought
 To those who need the gift. But, after all,
 Is aught so certain as that man is doomed
 To breathe beneath a vault of ignorance ?
 The natural roof of that dark house in which
 His soul is pent ! How little can be known—
 This is the wise man’s sigh ; how far we err—
 This is the good man’s not unfrequent pang !
 And they perhaps err least, the lowly class
 Whom a benign necessity compels
 To follow reason’s least ambitious course ;
 Such do I mean who, unperplexed by doubt,
 And unincited by a wish to look
 Into high objects farther than they may,
 Pace to and fro, from morn till even-tide,
 The narrow avenue of daily toil
 For daily bread.”

“ Yes,” buoyantly exclaimed
 The pale Recluse—“ praise to the sturdy plough,
 And patient spade ; praise to the simple crook,
 And ponderous loom—resounding while it holds
 Body and mind in one captivity ;
 And let the light mechanic tool be hailed
 With honour ; which, encasing by the power
 Of long companionship, the artist’s hand,
 Cuts off that hand, with all its world of nerves,
 From a too busy commerce with the heart !
 —Inglorious implements of craft and toil,
 Both ye that shape and build, and ye that force,
 By slow solicitation, earth to yield
 Her annual bounty, sparingly dealt forth

With wise reluctance ; you would I extol,
 Not for gross good alone which ye produce,
 But for the impertinent and ceaseless strife
 Of proofs and reasons ye preclude—in those
 Who to your dull society are born,
 And with their humble birthright rest content.
 —Would I had ne’er renounced it !”

A slight flush

Of moral anger previously had tinged
 The old Man’s cheek ; but, at this closing turn
 Of self-reproach, it passed away. Said he,
 “ That which we feel we utter ; as we think
 So have we argued ; reaping for our pains
 No visible recompense. For our relief
 You,” to the Pastor turning thus he spake,
 “ Have kindly interposed. May I entreat
 Your further help ? The mine of real life
 Dig for us ; and present us, in the shape
 Of virgin ore, that gold which we, by pains
 Fruitless as those of æry alchemists,
 Seek from the torturing crucible. There lies
 Around us a domain where you have long
 Watched both the outward course and inner
 heart :

Give us, for our abstractions, solid facts ;
 For our disputes, plain pictures. Say what man
 He is who cultivates yon hanging field ;
 What qualities of mind she bears, who comes,
 For morn and evening service, with her pail,
 To that green pasture ; place before our sight
 The family who dwell within yon house
 Fenced round with glittering laurel ; or in that
 Below, from which the curling smoke ascends.
 Or rather, as we stand on holy earth,
 And have the dead around us, take from them
 Your instances ; for they are both best known,
 And by frail man most equitably judged.
 Epitomise the life ; pronounce, you can,
 Authentic epitaphs on some of these
 Who, from their lowly mansions hither brought,
 Beneath this turf lie mouldering at our feet :
 So, by your records, may our doubts be solved ;
 And so, not searching higher, we may learn
 To prize the breath we share with human kind ;
 And look upon the dust of man with awe.”

The Priest replied—“ An office you impose
 For which peculiar requisites are mine ;
 Yet much, I feel, is wanting—else the task
 Would be most grateful. True indeed it is
 That they whom death has hidden from our sight
 Are worthiest of the mind’s regard ; with these
 The future cannot contradict the past :
 Mortality’s last exercise and proof

Is undergone ; the transit made that shows
The very Soul, revealed as she departs.
Yet, on your first suggestion, will I give,
Ere we descend into these silent vaults,
One picture from the living.

You behold,

High on the breast of yon dark mountain, dark
With stony barrenness, a shining speck
Bright as a sunbeam sleeping till a shower
Brush it away, or cloud pass over it ;
And such it might be deemed—a sleeping sunbeam ;
But 'tis a plot of cultivated ground,
Cut off, an island in the dusky waste ;
And that attractive brightness is its own.
The lofty site, by nature framed to tempt
Amid a wilderness of rocks and stones
The tiller's hand, a hermit might have chosen,
For opportunity presented, thence
Far forth to send his wandering eye o'er land
And ocean, and look down upon the works,
The habitations, and the ways of men,
Himself unseen ! But no tradition tells
That ever hermit dipped his maple dish
In the sweet spring that lurks 'mid yon green fields ;
And no such visionary views belong
To those who occupy and till the ground,
High on that mountain where they long have dwelt
A wedded pair in childless solitude.
A house of stones collected on the spot,
By rude hands built, with rocky knolls in front,
Backed also by a ledge of rock, whose crest
Of birch-trees waves over the chimney top ;
A rough abode—in colour, shape, and size,
Such as in unsafe times of border-war
Might have been wished for and contrived, to elude
The eye of roving plunderer—for their need
Suffices ; and unshaken bears the assault
Of their most dreaded foe, the strong South-west
In anger blowing from the distant sea.
—Alone within her solitary hut ;
There, or within the compass of her fields,
At any moment may the Dame be found,
True as the stock-dove to her shallow nest
And to the grove that holds it. She beguiles
By intermingled work of house and field
The summer's day, and winter's ; with success
Not equal, but sufficient to maintain,
Even at the worst, a smooth stream of content,
Until the expected hour at which her Mate
From the far-distant quarry's vault returns ;
And by his converse crowns a silent day
With evening cheerfulness. In powers of mind,
In scale of culture, few among my flock
Hold lower rank than this sequestered pair :

But true humility descends from heaven ;
And that best gift of heaven hath fallen on them ;
Abundant recompense for every want.
—Stoop from your height, ye proud, and copy these !
Who, in their noiseless dwelling-place, can hear
The voice of wisdom whispering scripture texts
For the mind's government, or temper's peace ;
And recommending for their mutual need,
Forgiveness, patience, hope, and charity !”

“ Much was I pleased,” the grey-haired Wanderer
said,

“ When to those shining fields our notice first
You turned ; and yet more pleased have from your
lips

Gathered this fair report of them who dwell
In that retirement ; whither, by such course
Of evil hap and good as oft awaits
A tired way-faring man, once I was brought
While traversing alone yon mountain pass.
Dark on my road the autumnal evening fell,
And night succeeded with unusual gloom,
So hazardous that feet and hands became
Guides better than mine eyes—until a light
High in the gloom appeared, too high, methought,
For human habitation ; but I longed
To reach it, destitute of other hope.
I looked with steadiness as sailors look
On the north star, or watch-tower's distant lamp,
And saw the light—now fixed—and shifting now—
Not like a dancing meteor, but in line
Of never-varying motion, to and fro.
It is no night-fire of the naked hills,
Thought I—some friendly covert must be near.
With this persuasion thitherward my steps
I turn, and reach at last the guiding light ;
Joy to myself ! but to the heart of her
Who there was standing on the open hill,
(The same kind Matron whom your tongue hath
praised)

Alarm and disappointment ! The alarm
Ceased, when she learned through what mishap I
came,

And by what help had gained those distant fields.
Drawn from her cottage, on that æry height,
Bearing a lantern in her hand she stood,
Or paced the ground—to guide her Husband home,
By that unwearied signal, kenned afar ;
An anxious duty ! which the lofty site,
Traversed but by a few irregular paths,
Imposes, whensoe'er untoward chance
Detains him after his accustomed hour
Till night lies black upon the ground. ‘ But come,
Come,’ said the Matron, ‘ to our poor abode ;

Those dark rocks hide it !' Entering, I beheld
A blazing fire—beside a cleanly hearth
Sate down ; and to her office, with leave asked,
The Dame returned.

Or ere that glowing pile
Of mountain turf required the builder's hand
Its wasted splendour to repair, the door
Opened, and she re-entered with glad looks,
Her Helpmate following. Hospitable fare,
Frank conversation, made the evening's treat :
Need a bewildered traveller wish for more ?
But more was given ; I studied as we sate
By the bright fire, the good Man's form, and face
Not less than beautiful ; an open brow
Of undisturbed humanity ; a cheek
Suffused with something of a feminine hue ;
Eyes beaming courtesy and mild regard ;
But, in the quicker turns of the discourse,
Expression slowly varying, that evinced
A tardy apprehension. From a fount
Lost, thought I, in the obscurities of time,
But honoured once, those features and that mien
May have descended, though I see them here.
In such a man, so gentle and subdued,
Withal so graceful in his gentleness,
A race illustrious for heroic deeds,
Humbled, but not degraded, may expire.
This pleasing fancy (cherished and upheld
By sundry recollections of such fall
From high to low, ascent from low to high,
As books record, and even the careless mind
Cannot but notice among men and things)
Went with me to the place of my repose.

Roused by the crowing cock at dawn of day,
I yet had risen too late to interchange
A morning salutation with my Host,
Gone forth already to the far-off seat
Of his day's work. 'Three dark mid-winter
months

'Pass,' said the Matron, 'and I never see,
'Save when the sabbath brings its kind release,
'My Helpmate's face by light of day. He quits
'His door in darkness, nor till dusk returns.
'And, through Heaven's blessing, thus we gain
the bread

'For which we pray ; and for the wants provide
'Of sickness, accident, and helpless age.
'Companions have I many ; many friends,
'Dependants, comforters—my wheel, my fire,
'All day the house-clock ticking in mine ear,
'The cackling hen, the tender chicken brood,
'And the wild birds that gather round my porch.
'This honest sheep-dog's countenance I read ;

'With him can talk ; nor blush to waste a word
'On creatures less intelligent and shrewd.
'And if the blustering wind that drives the clouds
'Care not for me, he lingers round my door,
'And makes me pastime when our tempers suit ;—
'But, above all, my thoughts are my support,
'My comfort :—would that they were oftener fixed
'On what, for guidance in the way that leads
'To heaven, I know, by my Redeemer taught.'
The Matron ended—nor could I forbear
To exclaim—'O happy ! yielding to the law
Of these privations, richer in the main !—
While thankless thousands are oppress and clogged
By ease and leisure ; by the very wealth
And pride of opportunity made poor ;
While tens of thousands falter in their path,
And sink, through utter want of cheering light ;
For you the hours of labour do not flag ;
For you each evening hath its shining star,
And every sabbath-day its golden sun.' "

"Yes !" said the Solitary with a smile
That seemed to break from an expanding heart,
"The untutored bird may found, and so construct,
And with such soft materials line, her nest
Fixed in the centre of a prickly brake,
That the thorns wound her not ; they only guard.
Powers not unjustly likened to those gifts
Of happy instinct which the woodland bird
Shares with her species, nature's grace sometimes
Upon the individual doth confer,
Among her higher creatures born and trained
To use of reason. And, I own that, tired
Of the ostentatious world—a swelling stage
With empty actions and vain passions stuffed,
And from the private struggles of mankind
Hoping far less than I could wish to hope,
Far less than once I trusted and believed—
I love to hear of those, who, not contending
Nor summoned to contend for virtue's prize,
Miss not the humbler good at which they aim,
Blest with a kindly faculty to blunt
The edge of adverse circumstance, and turn
Into their contraries the petty plagues
And hindrances with which they stand beset.
In early youth, among my native hills,
I knew a Scottish Peasant who possessed
A few small crofts of stone-encumbered ground ;
Masses of every shape and size, that lay
Scattered about under the mouldering walls
Of a rough precipice ; and some, apart,
In quarters unobnoxious to such chance,
As if the moon had showered them down in spite.
But he repined not. Though the plough was scared

By these obstructions, 'round the shady stones
A fertilising moisture,' said the Swain,
'Gathers, and is preserved; and feeding dews
'And damps, through all the droughty summer
day

'From out their substance issuing, maintain
'Herbage that never fails: no grass springs up
'So green, so fresh, so plentiful, as mine!'
But thinly sown these natures; rare, at least,
The mutual aptitude of seed and soil
That yields such kindly product. He, whose bed
Perhaps yon loose sods cover, the poor Pensioner
Brought yesterday from our sequestered dell
Here to lie down in lasting quiet, he,
If living now, could otherwise report
Of rustic loneliness: that grey-haired Orphan—
So call him, for humanity to him
No parent was—feelingly could have told,
In life, in death, what solitude can breed
Of selfishness, and cruelty, and vice;
Or, if it breed not, hath not power to cure.
—But your compliance, Sir! with our request
My words too long have hindered."

Undeterred,

Perhaps incited rather, by these shocks,
In no ungracious opposition, given
To the confiding spirit of his own
Experienced faith, the reverend Pastor said,
Around him looking; "Where shall I begin?
Who shall be first selected from my flock
Gathered together in their peaceful fold?"
He paused—and having lifted up his eyes
To the pure heaven, he cast them down again
Upon the earth beneath his feet; and spake:—

"To a mysteriously-united pair
This place is consecrate; to Death and Life,
And to the best affections that proceed
From their conjunction; consecrate to faith
In him who bled for man upon the cross;
Hallowed to revelation; and no less
To reason's mandates; and the hopes divine
Of pure imagination;—above all,
To charity, and love, that have provided,
Within these precincts, a capacious bed
And receptacle, open to the good
And evil, to the just and the unjust;
In which they find an equal resting-place:
Even as the multitude of kindred brooks
And streams, whose murmur fills this hollow vale,
Whether their course be turbulent or smooth,
Their waters clear or sullied, all are lost
Within the bosom of yon crystal Lake,
And end their journey in the same repose!

And blest are they who sleep; and we that know,
While in a spot like this we breathe and walk,
That all beneath us by the wings are covered
Of motherly humanity, outspread
And gathering all within their tender shade,
Though loth and slow to come! A battle-field,
In stillness left when slaughter is no more,
With this compared, makes a strange spectacle!
A dismal prospect yields the wild shore strewn
With wrecks, and trod by feet of young and old
Wandering about in miserable search
Of friends or kindred, whom the angry sea
Restores not to their prayer! Ah! who would
think

That all the scattered subjects which compose
Earth's melancholy vision through the space
Of all her climes—these wretched, these depraved,
To virtue lost, insensible of peace,
From the delights of charity cut off,
To pity dead, the oppressor and the opprest;
Tyrants who utter the destroying word,
And slaves who will consent to be destroyed—
Were of one species with the sheltered few,
Who, with a dutiful and tender hand,
Lodged, in a dear appropriated spot,
This file of infants; some that never breathed
The vital air; others, which, though allowed
That privilege, did yet expire too soon,
Or with too brief a warning, to admit
Administration of the holy rite
That lovingly consigns the babe to the arms
Of Jesus, and his everlasting care.
These that in trembling hope are laid apart;
And the besprinkled nursling, unrequired
Till he begins to smile upon the breast
That feeds him; and the tottering little-one
Taken from air and sunshine when the rose
Of infancy first blooms upon his cheek;
The thinking, thoughtless, school-boy; the bold
youth

Of soul impetuous, and the bashful maid
Smitten while all the promises of life
Are opening round her; those of middle age,
Cast down while confident in strength they stand,
Like pillars fixed more firmly, as might seem,
And more secure, by very weight of all
That, for support, rests on them; the decayed
And burthensome; and lastly, that poor few
Whose light of reason is with age extinct;
The hopeful and the hopeless, first and last,
The earliest summoned and the longest spared—
Are here deposited, with tribute paid
Various, but unto each some tribute paid;
As if, amid these peaceful hills and groves,

Society were touched with kind concern,
And gentle 'Nature grieved, that one should die ;'
Or, if the change demanded no regret,
Observed the liberating stroke—and blessed.

And whence that tribute? wherefore these regards?

Not from the naked *Heart* alone of Man
(Though claiming high distinction upon earth
As the sole spring and fountain-head of tears,
His own peculiar utterance for distress
Or gladness)—No," the philosophic Priest
Continued, "'tis not in the vital seat
Of feeling to produce them, without aid
From the pure soul, the soul sublime and pure ;
With her two faculties of eye and ear,
The one by which a creature, whom his sins
Have rendered prone, can upward look to heaven ;
The other that empowers him to perceive
The voice of Deity, on height and plain,
Whispering those truths in stillness, which the
Word,
'To the four quarters of the winds, proclaims.

Not without such assistance could the use
Of these benign observances prevail :
Thus are they born, thus fostered, thus maintained ;
And by the care prospective of our wise
Forefathers, who, to guard against the shocks
The fluctuation and decay of things,
Embodied and established these high truths
In solemn institutions :—men convinced
That life is love and immortality,
The being one, and one the element.
There lies the channel, and original bed,
From the beginning, hollowed out and scooped
For Man's affections—else betrayed and lost,
And swallowed up 'mid deserts infinite !
This is the genuine course, the aim, and end
Of prescient reason ; all conclusions else
Are abject, vain, presumptuous, and perverse.
The faith partaking of those holy times,
Life, I repeat, is energy of love
Divine or human ; exercised in pain,
In strife, and tribulation ; and ordained,
If so approved and sanctified, to pass,
Through shades and silent rest, to endless joy."

BOOK SIXTH.

THE CHURCH-YARD AMONG THE MOUNTAINS.

ARGUMENT.

Poet's Address to the State and Church of England—The Pastor not inferior to the ancient Worthies of the Church—He begins his Narratives with an instance of unrequited Love—Anguish of mind subdued, and how—The lonely Miner—An instance of perseverance—Which leads by contrast to an example of abused talents, irresolution, and weakness—Solitary, applying this covertly to his own case, asks for an instance of some Stranger, whose dispositions may have led him to end his days here—Pastor, in answer, gives an account of the harmonising influence of Solitude upon two men of opposite principles, who had encountered agitations in public life—The rule by which Peace may be obtained expressed, and where—Solitary hints at an overpowering Fatality—Answer of the Pastor—What subjects he will exclude from his Narratives—Conversation upon this—Instance of an unamiable character, a Female, and why given—Contrasted with this, a meek sufferer, from unguarded and betrayed love—Instance of heavier guilt, and its consequences to the Offender—With this instance of a Marriage Contract broken is contrasted one of a Widower, evidencing his faithful affection towards his deceased wife by his care of their female Children.

HAIL to the crown by Freedom shaped—to gird
An English Sovereign's brow ! and to the throne
Whereon he sits ! Whose deep foundations lie
In veneration and the people's love ;
Whose steps are equity, whose seat is law.
—Hail to the State of England ! And conjoin
With this a salutation as devout,
Made to the spiritual fabric of her Church ;
Founded in truth ; by blood of Martyrdom
Cemented ; by the hands of Wisdom reared
In beauty of holiness, with ordered pomp,
Decent and unimproved. The voice, that greets
The majesty of both, shall pray for both ;
That, mutually protected and sustained,
They may endure long as the sea surrounds
This favoured Land, or sunshine warms her soil.

And O, ye swelling hills, and spacious plains !
Besprent from shore to shore with steeple-towers,
And spires whose 'silent finger points to heaven ;'
Nor wanting, at wide intervals, the bulk
Of ancient minster lifted above the cloud
Of the dense air, which town or city breeds

To intercept the sun's glad beams—may ne'er
 That true succession fail of English hearts,
 Who, with ancestral feeling, can perceive
 What in those holy structures ye possess
 Of ornamental interest, and the charm
 Of pious sentiment diffused afar,
 And human charity, and social love.
 —Thus never shall the indignities of time
 Approach their reverend graces, unopposed ;
 Nor shall the elements be free to hurt
 Their fair proportions ; nor the blinder rage
 Of bigot zeal madly to overturn ;
 And, if the desolating hand of war
 Spare them, they shall continue to bestow,
 Upon the thronged abodes of busy men
 (Depraved, and ever prone to fill the mind
 Exclusively with transitory things)
 An air and mien of dignified pursuit ;
 Of sweet civility, on rustic wilds.

The Poet, fostering for his native land
 Such hope, entreats that servants may abound
 Of those pure altars worthy ; ministers
 Detached from pleasure, to the love of gain
 Superior, insusceptible of pride,
 And by ambitious longings undisturbed ;
 Men, whose delight is where their duty leads
 Or fixes them ; whose least distinguished day
 Shines with some portion of that heavenly lustre
 Which makes the sabbath lovely in the sight
 Of blessed angels, pitying human cares.
 —And, as on earth it is the doom of truth
 To be perpetually attacked by foes
 Open or covert, be that priesthood still,
 For her defence, replenished with a band
 Of strenuous champions, in scholastic arts
 Thoroughly disciplined ; nor (if in course
 Of the revolving world's disturbances
 Cause should recur, which righteous Heaven avert !
 To meet such trial) from their spiritual sires
 Degenerate ; who, constrained to wield the sword
 Of disputation, shrunk not, though assailed
 With hostile din, and combating in sight
 Of angry umpires, partial and unjust ;
 And did, thereafter, bathe their hands in fire,
 So to declare the conscience satisfied :
 Nor for their bodies would accept release ;
 But, blessing God and praising him, bequeathed
 With their last breath, from out the smouldering
 flame,
 The faith which they by diligence had earned,
 Or, through illuminating grace, received,
 For their dear countrymen, and all mankind.
 O high example, constancy divine !

Even such a Man (inheriting the zeal
 And from the sanctity of elder times
 Not deviating,—a priest, the like of whom,
 If multiplied, and in their stations set,
 Would o'er the bosom of a joyful land
 Spread true religion and her genuine fruits)
 Before me stood that day ; on holy ground
 Fraught with the relics of mortality,
 Exalting tender themes, by just degrees
 To lofty raised ; and to the highest, last ;
 The head and mighty paramount of truths,—
 Immortal life, in never-fading worlds,
 For mortal creatures, conquered and secured.

That basis laid, those principles of faith
 Announced, as a preparatory act
 Of reverence done to the spirit of the place,
 The Pastor cast his eyes upon the ground ;
 Not, as before, like one oppressed with awe,
 But with a mild and social cheerfulness ;
 Then to the Solitary turned, and spake.

“ At morn or eve, in your retired domain,
 Perchance you not unfrequently have marked
 A Visitor—in quest of herbs and flowers ;
 Too delicate employ, as would appear,
 For one, who, though of drooping mien, had yet
 From nature's kindness received a frame
 Robust as ever rural labour bred.”

The Solitary answered : “ Such a Form
 Full well I recollect. We often crossed
 Each other's path ; but, as the Intruder seemed
 Fondly to prize the silence which he kept,
 And I as willingly did cherish mine,
 We met, and passed, like shadows. I have heard,
 From my good Host, that being crazed in brain
 By unrequited love, he scaled the rocks,
 Dived into caves, and pierced the matted woods,
 In hope to find some virtuous herb of power
 To cure his malady !”

The Vicar smiled,—
 “ Alas ! before to-morrow's sun goes down
 His habitation will be here : for him
 That open grave is destined.”

“ Died he then
 Of pain and grief ?” the Solitary asked,
 “ Do not believe it ; never could that be !”

“ He loved,” the Vicar answered, “ deeply loved,
 Loved fondly, truly, fervently ; and dared
 At length to tell his love, but sued in vain ;
 Rejected, yea repelled ; and, if with scorn
 Upon the haughty maiden's brow, 'tis but

A high-prized plume which female Beauty wears
In wantonness of conquest, or puts on
To cheat the world, or from herself to hide
Humiliation, when no longer free.

That he could brook, and glory in ;—but when
The tidings came that she whom he had wooed
Was wedded to another, and his heart
Was forced to rend away its only hope ;
Then, Pity could have scarcely found on earth
An object worthier of regard than he,
In the transition of that bitter hour !
Lost was she, lost ; nor could the Sufferer say
That in the act of preference he had been
Unjustly dealt with ; but the Maid was gone !
Had vanished from his prospects and desires ;
Not by translation to the heavenly choir
Who have put off their mortal spoils—ah no !
She lives another's wishes to complete,—
' Joy be their lot, and happiness,' he cried,
' His lot and hers, as misery must be mine !'

Such was that strong concussion ; but the Man,
Who trembled, trunk and limbs, like some huge oak
By a fierce tempest shaken, soon resumed
The stedfast quiet natural to a mind
Of composition gentle and sedate,
And, in its movements, circumspect and slow.
To books, and to the long-forsaken desk,
O'er which enchained by science he had loved
To bend, he stoutly re-addressed himself,
Resolved to quell his pain, and search for truth
With keener appetite (if that might be)
And closer industry. Of what ensued
Within the heart no outward sign appeared
Till a betraying sickness was seen
To tinge his cheek ; and through his frame it crept
With slow mutation unconcealable ;
Such universal change as autumn makes
In the fair body of a leafy grove
Discoloured, then divested.

'Tis affirmed

By poets skilled in nature's secret ways
That Love will not submit to be controlled
By mastery :—and the good Man lacked not friends
Who strove to instil this truth into his mind,
A mind in all heart-mysteries unversed.
' Go to the hills,' said one, ' remit a while
' This baneful diligence :—at early morn
' Court the fresh air, explore the heaths and woods ;
' And, leaving it to others to foretell,
' By calculations sage, the ebb and flow
' Of tides, and when the moon will be eclipsed,
' Do you, for your own benefit, construct
' A calendar of flowers, plucked as they blow

' Where health abides, and cheerfulness, and peace.'
The attempt was made ;—'tis needless to report
How hopelessly ; but innocence is strong,
And an entire simplicity of mind
A thing most sacred in the eye of Heaven ;
That opens, for such sufferers, relief
Within the soul, fountains of grace divine ;
And doth commend their weakness and disease
To Nature's care, assisted in her office
By all the elements that round her wait
To generate, to preserve, and to restore ;
And by her beautiful array of forms
Shedding sweet influence from above ; or pure
Delight exhaling from the ground they tread."

" Impute it not to impatience, if," exclaimed
The Wanderer, " I infer that he was healed
By perseverance in the course prescribed."

" You do not err : the powers, that had been lost
By slow degrees, were gradually regained ;
The fluttering nerves composed ; the beating heart
In rest established ; and the jarring thoughts
To harmony restored.—But yon dark mould
Will cover him, in the fulness of his strength,
Hastily smitten by a fever's force ;
Yet not with stroke so sudden as refused
Time to look back with tenderness on her
Whom he had loved in passion ; and to send
Some farewell words—with one, but one, request ;
That, from his dying hand, she would accept
Of his possessions that which most he prized ;
A book, upon whose leaves some chosen plants,
By his own hand disposed with nicest care,
In undecaying beauty were preserved ;
Mute register, to him, of time and place,
And various fluctuations in the breast ;
To her, a monument of faithful love
Conquered, and in tranquillity retained !

Close to his destined habitation, lies
One who achieved a humbler victory,
Though marvellous in its kind. A place there is
High in these mountains, that allured a band
Of keen adventurers to unite their pains
In search of precious ore : they tried, were foiled—
And all desisted, all, save him alone.
He, taking counsel of his own clear thoughts,
And trusting only to his own weak hands,
Urged unremittingly the stubborn work,
Unseconded, uncountenanced ; then, as time
Passed on, while still his lonely efforts found
No recompense, derided ; and at length,
By many pitied, as insane of mind ;

By others dreaded as the luckless thrall
 Of subterranean Spirits feeding hope
 By various mockery of sight and sound ;
 Hope after hope, encouraged and destroyed.
 —But when the lord of seasons had matured
 The fruits of earth through space of twice ten years,
 The mountain's entrails offered to his view
 And trembling grasp the long-deferred reward.
 Not with more transport did Columbus greet
 A world, his rich discovery ! But our Swain,
 A very hero till his point was gained,
 Proved all unable to support the weight
 Of prosperous fortune. On the fields he looked
 With an unsettled liberty of thought,
 Wishes and endless schemes ; by daylight walked
 Giddy and restless ; ever and anon
 Quaffed in his gratitude immoderate cups ;
 And truly might be said to die of joy !
 He vanished ; but conspicuous to this day
 The path remains that linked his cottage-door
 To the mine's mouth ; a long and slanting track,
 Upon the rugged mountain's stony side,
 Worn by his daily visits to and from
 The darksome centre of a constant hope.
 This vestige, neither force of beating rain,
 Nor the vicissitudes of frost and thaw
 Shall cause to fade, till ages pass away ;
 And it is named, in memory of the event,
 The PATH OF PERSEVERANCE."

"Thou from whom
 Man has his strength," exclaimed the Wanderer,
 "oh !

Do thou direct it ! To the virtuous grant
 The penetrative eye which can perceive
 In this blind world the guiding vein of hope ;
 That, like this Labourer, such may dig their way,
 'Unshaken, unseduced, unterrified ;'
 Grant to the wise *his* firmness of resolve !"

"That prayer were not superfluous," said the
 Priest,
 "Amid the noblest relics, proudest dust,
 That Westminster, for Britain's glory, holds
 Within the bosom of her awful pile,
 Ambitiously collected. Yet the sigh,
 Which wafts that prayer to heaven, is due to all,
 Wherever laid, who living fell below
 Their virtue's humbler mark ; a sigh of *pain*
 If to the opposite extreme they sank.
 How would you pity her who yonder rests ;
 Him, farther off ; the pair, who here are laid ;
 But, above all, that mixture of earth's mould
 Whom sight of this green hillock to my mind
 Recals !

He lived not till his locks were nipped
 By seasonable frost of age ; nor died
 Before his temples, prematurely forced
 To mix the manly brown with silver grey,
 Gave obvious instance of the sad effect
 Produced, when thoughtless Folly hath usurped
 The natural crown that sage Experience wears.
 Gay, volatile, ingenious, quick to learn,
 And prompt to exhibit all that he possessed
 Or could perform ; a zealous actor, hired
 Into the troop of mirth, a soldier, sworn
 Into the lists of giddy enterprise—
 Such was he ; yet, as if within his frame
 Two several souls alternately had lodged,
 Two sets of manners could the Youth put on ;
 And, fraught with antics as the Indian bird
 That writhes and chatters in her wiry cage,
 Was graceful, when it pleased him, smooth and still
 As the mute swan that floats adown the stream,
 Or, on the waters of the unruffled lake,
 Anchors her placid beauty. Not a leaf,
 That flutters on the bough, lighter than he ;
 And not a flower, that droops in the green shade,
 More winningly reserved ! If ye enquire
 How such consummate elegance was bred
 Amid these wilds, this answer may suffice ;
 'Twas Nature's will ; who sometimes undertakes,
 For the reproof of human vanity,
 Art to outstrip in her peculiar walk.
 Hence, for this Favourite—lavishly endowed
 With personal gifts, and bright instinctive wit,
 While both, embellishing each other, stood
 Yet farther recommended by the charm
 Of fine demeanour, and by dance and song,
 And skill in letters—every fancy shaped
 Fair expectations ; nor, when to the world's
 Capacious field forth went the Adventurer, there
 Were he and his attainments overlooked,
 Or scantily rewarded ; but all hopes,
 Cherished for him, he suffered to depart,
 Like blighted buds ; or clouds that mimicked land
 Before the sailor's eye ; or diamond drops
 That sparkling decked the morning grass ; or aught
 That *was* attractive, and hath ceased to be !

Yet, when this Prodigal returned, the rites
 Of joyful greeting were on him bestowed,
 Who, by humiliation undeterred,
 Sought for his weariness a place of rest
 Within his Father's gates.—Whence came he ?—
 clothed
 In tattered garb, from hovels where abides
 Necessity, the stationary host
 Of vagrant poverty ; from rifted barns

Where no one dwells but the wide-staring owl
 And the owl's prey ; from these bare haunts, to which
 He had descended from the proud saloon,
 He came, the ghost of beauty and of health,
 The wreck of gaiety ! But soon revived
 In strength, in power refitted, he renewed
 His suit to Fortune ; and she smiled again
 Upon a fickle Ingrate. Thrice he rose,
 Thrice sank as willingly. For he—whose nerves
 Were used to thrill with pleasure, while his voice
 Softly accompanied the tuneful harp,
 By the nice finger of fair ladies touched
 In glittering halls—was able to derive
 No less enjoyment from an abject choice.
 Who happier for the moment—who more blithe
 Than this fallen Spirit ? in those dreary holds
 His talents lending to exalt the freaks
 Of merry-making beggars,—now, provoked
 To laughter multiplied in louder peals
 By his malicious wit ; then, all enchained
 With mute astonishment, themselves to see
 In their own arts outdone, their fame eclipsed,
 As by the very presence of the Fiend
 Who dictates and inspires illusive feats,
 For knavish purposes ! The city, too,
 (With shame I speak it) to her guilty bowers
 Allured him, sunk so low in self-respect
 As there to linger, there to eat his bread,
 Hired minstrel of voluptuous blandishment ;
 Charming the air with skill of hand or voice,
 Listen who would, be wrought upon who might,
 Sincerely wretched hearts, or falsely gay.
 —Such the too frequent tenour of his boast
 In ears that relished the report ;—but all
 Was from his Parents happily concealed ;
 Who saw enough for blame and pitying love.
 They also were permitted to receive
 His last, repentant breath ; and closed his eyes,
 No more to open on that irksome world
 Where he had long existed in the state
 Of a young fowl beneath one mother hatched,
 Though from another sprung, different in kind :
 Where he had lived, and could not cease to live,
 Distracted in propensity ; content
 With neither element of good or ill ;
 And yet in both rejoicing ; man unblest ;
 Of contradictions infinite the slave,
 Till his deliverance, when Mercy made him
 One with himself, and one with them that sleep.”

“Tis strange,” observed the Solitary, “strange
 It seems, and scarcely less than pitiful,
 That in a land where charity provides
 For all that can no longer feed themselves,

A man like this should choose to bring his shame
 To the parental door ; and with his sighs
 Infect the air which he had freely breathed
 In happy infancy. He could not pine,
 Through lack of converse ; no—he must have found
 Abundant exercise for thought and speech,
 In his dividual being, self-reviewed,
 Self-catechised, self-punished.—Some there are
 Who, drawing near their final home, and much
 And daily longing that the same were reached,
 Would rather shun than seek the fellowship
 Of kindred mould.—Such haply here are laid ?”

“Yes,” said the Priest, “the Genius of our hills—
 Who seems, by these stupendous barriers cast
 Round his domain, desirous not alone
 To keep his own, but also to exclude
 All other progeny—doth sometimes lure,
 Even by his studied depth of privacy,
 The unhappy alien hoping to obtain
 Concealment, or seduced by wish to find,
 In place from outward molestation free,
 Helps to internal ease. Of many such
 Could I discourse ; but as their stay was brief,
 So their departure only left behind
 Fancies, and loose conjectures. Other trace
 Survives, for worthy mention, of a pair
 Who, from the pressure of their several fates,
 Meeting as strangers, in a petty town
 Whose blue roofs ornament a distant reach
 Of this far-winding vale, remained as friends
 True to their choice ; and gave their bones in trust
 To this loved cemetery, here to lodge
 With unescutcheoned privacy interred
 Far from the family vault.—A Chieftain one
 By right of birth ; within whose spotless breast
 The fire of ancient Caledonia burned :
 He, with the foremost whose impatience hailed
 The Stuart, landing to resume, by force
 Of arms, the crown which bigotry had lost,
 Aroused his clan ; and, fighting at their head,
 With his brave sword endeavoured to prevent
 Culloden's fatal overthrow. Escaped
 From that disastrous rout, to foreign shores
 He fled ; and when the lenient hand of time
 Those troubles had appeased, he sought and gained,
 For his obscured condition, an obscure
 Retreat, within this nook of English ground.

The other, born in Britain's southern tract,
 Had fixed his milder loyalty, and placed
 His gentler sentiments of love and hate,
 There, where *they* placed them who in conscience
 prized

The new succession, as a line of kings
 Whose oath had virtue to protect the land
 Against the dire assaults of papacy
 And arbitrary rule. But launch thy bark
 On the distempered flood of public life,
 And cause for most rare triumph will be thine
 If, spite of keenest eye and steadiest hand,
 The stream, that bears thee forward, prove not, soon
 Or late, a perilous master. He—who oft,
 Beneath the battlements and stately trees
 That round his mansion cast a sober gloom,
 Had moralised on this, and other truths
 Of kindred import, pleased and satisfied—
 Was forced to vent his wisdom with a sigh
 Heaved from the heart in fortune's bitterness,
 When he had crushed a plentiful estate
 By ruinous contest, to obtain a seat
 In Britain's senate. Fruitless was the attempt:
 And while the uproar of that desperate strife
 Continued yet to vibrate on his ear,
 The vanquished Whig, under a borrowed name,
 (For the mere sound and echo of his own
 Haunted him with sensations of disgust
 That he was glad to lose) slunk from the world
 To the deep shade of those untravell'd Wilds;
 In which the Scottish Laird had long possessed
 An undisturbed abode. Here, then, they met,
 Two doughty champions; flaming Jacobite
 And sullen Hanoverian! You might think
 That losses and vexations, less severe
 Than those which they had severally sustained,
 Would have inclined each to abate his zeal
 For his ungrateful cause; no,—I have heard
 My reverend Father tell that, 'mid the calm
 Of that small town encountering thus, they filled,
 Daily, its bowling-green with harmless strife;
 Plagued with uncharitable thoughts the church;
 And vexed the market-place. But in the breasts
 Of these opponents gradually was wrought,
 With little change of general sentiment,
 Such leaning towards each other, that their days
 By choice were spent in constant fellowship;
 And if, at times, they fretted with the yoke,
 Those very bickerings made them love it more.

A favourite boundary to their lengthened walks
 This Church-yard was. And, whether they had come
 Treading their path in sympathy and linked
 In social converse, or by some short space
 Discreetly parted to preserve the peace,
 One spirit seldom failed to extend its sway
 Over both minds, when they awhile had marked
 The visible quiet of this holy ground,
 And breathed its soothing air;—the spirit of hope

And saintly magnanimity; that—spurning
 The field of selfish difference and dispute,
 And every care which transitory things,
 Earth and the kingdoms of the earth, create—
 Doth, by a rapture of forgetfulness,
 Preclude forgiveness, from the praise debarred,
 Which else the Christian virtue might have claimed.

There live who yet remember here to have seen
 Their courtly figures, seated on the stump
 Of an old yew, their favourite resting-place.
 But as the remnant of the long-lived tree
 Was disappearing by a swift decay,
 They, with joint care, determined to erect,
 Upon its site, a dial, that might stand
 For public use preserved, and thus survive
 As their own private monument: for this
 Was the particular spot, in which they wished
 (And Heaven was pleased to accomplish the desire)
 That, undivided, their remains should lie.
 So, where the mouldered tree had stood, was raised
 Yon structure, framing, with the ascent of steps
 That to the decorated pillar lead,
 A work of art more sumptuous than might seem
 To suit this place; yet built in no proud scorn
 Of rustic homeliness; they only aimed
 To ensure for it respectful guardianship.
 Around the margin of the plate, whereon
 The shadow falls to note the stealthy hours,
 Winds an inscriptive legend."—At these words
 Thither we turned; and gathered, as we read,
 The appropriate sense, in Latin numbers couched:
*'Time flies; it is his melancholy task
 To bring, and bear away, delusive hopes,
 And re-produce the troubles he destroys.
 But, while his blindness thus is occupied,
 Discerning Mortal! do thou serve the will
 Of Time's eternal Master, and that peace,
 Which the world wants, shall be for thee confirmed!'*

"Smooth verse, inspired by no unlettered Muse,"
 Exclaimed the Sceptic, "and the strain of thought
 Accords with nature's language;—the soft voice
 Of yon white torrent falling down the rocks
 Speaks, less distinctly, to the same effect.
 If, then, their blended influence be not lost
 Upon our hearts, not wholly lost, I grant,
 Even upon mine, the more are we required
 To feel for those among our fellow-men,
 Who, offering no obedience to the world,
 Are yet made desperate by 'too quick a sense
 Of constant infelicity,' cut off
 From peace like exiles on some barren rock,
 Their life's appointed prison; not more free

Than sentinels, between two armies, set,
With nothing better, in the chill night air,
Than their own thoughts to comfort them. Say
why

That ancient story of Prometheus chained
To the bare rock, on frozen Caucasus;
The vulture, the inexhaustible repast
Drawn from his vitals? Say what meant the woes
By Tantalus entailed upon his race,
And the dark sorrows of the line of Thebes?
Fictions in form, but in their substance truths,
Tremendous truths! familiar to the men
Of long-past times, nor obsolete in ours.
Exchange the shepherd's frock of native grey
For robes with regal purple tinged; convert
The crook into a sceptre; give the pomp
Of circumstance; and here the tragic Muse
Shall find apt subjects for her highest art.
Amid the groves, under the shadowy hills,
The generations are prepared; the pangs,
The internal pangs, are ready; the dread strife
Of poor humanity's afflicted will
Struggling in vain with ruthless destiny."

"Though," said the Priest in answer, "these be
terms

Which a divine philosophy rejects,
We, whose established and unfailing trust
Is in controlling Providence, admit
That, through all stations, human life abounds
With mysteries;—for, if Faith were left untried,
How could the might, that lurks within her, then
Be shown? her glorious excellence—that ranks
Among the first of Powers and Virtues—proved?
Our system is not fashioned to preclude
That sympathy which you for others ask;
And I could tell, not travelling for my theme
Beyond these humble graves, of grievous crimes
And strange disasters; but I pass them by,
Loth to disturb what Heaven hath hushed in peace.
—Still less, far less, am I inclined to treat
Of Man degraded in his Maker's sight
By the deformities of brutish vice:
For, in such portraits, though a vulgar face
And a coarse outside of repulsive life
And unaffected manners might at once
Be recognised by all—"Ah! do not think,"
The Wanderer somewhat eagerly exclaimed,
"Wish could be ours that you, for such poor gain,
(Gain shall I call it?—gain of what?—for whom?)
Should breathe a word tending to violate
Your own pure spirit. Not a step we look for
In slight of that forbearance and reserve
Which common human-heartedness inspires,

And mortal ignorance and frailty claim,
Upon this sacred ground, if nowhere else."

"True," said the Solitary, "be it far
From us to infringe the laws of charity.
Let judgment here in mercy be pronounced;
This, self-respecting Nature prompts, and this
Wisdom enjoins; but if the thing we seek
Be genuine knowledge, bear we then in mind
How, from his lofty throne, the sun can fling
Colours as bright on exhalations bred
By weedy pool or pestilential swamp,
As by the rivulet sparkling where it runs,
Or the pellucid lake."

"Small risk," said I,
"Of such illusion do we here incur;
Temptation here is none to exceed the truth;
No evidence appears that they who rest
Within this ground, were covetous of praise,
Or of remembrance even, deserved or not.
Green is the Church-yard, beautiful and green,
Ridge rising gently by the side of ridge,
A heaving surface, almost wholly free
From interruption of sepulchral stones,
And mantled o'er with aboriginal turf
And everlasting flowers. These Dalesmen trust
The lingering gleam of their departed lives
To oral record, and the silent heart;
Depositories faithful and more kind
Than fondest epitaph: for, if those fail,
What boots the sculptured tomb? And who can
blame,

Who rather would not envy, men that feel
This mutual confidence; if, from such source,
The practice flow,—if thence, or from a deep
And general humility in death?
Nor should I much condemn it, if it spring
From disregard of time's destructive power,
As only capable to prey on things
Of earth, and human nature's mortal part.

Yet—in less simple districts, where we see
Stone lift its forehead emulous of stone
In courting notice; and the ground all paved
With commendations of departed worth;
Reading, where'er we turn, of innocent lives,
Of each domestic charity fulfilled,
And sufferings meekly borne—I, for my part,
Though with the silence pleased that here prevails,
Among those fair recitals also range,
Soothed by the natural spirit which they breathe.
And, in the centre of a world whose soil
Is rank with all unkindness, compassed round
With such memorials, I have sometimes felt,

It was no momentary happiness
To have *one* Enclosure where the voice that speaks
In envy or detraction is not heard ;
Which malice may not enter ; where the traces
Of evil inclinations are unknown ;
Where love and pity tenderly unite
With resignation ; and no jarring tone
Intrudes, the peaceful concert to disturb
Of amity and gratitude."

"Thus sanctioned,"

The Pastor said, "I willingly confine
My narratives to subjects that excite
Feelings with these accordant ; love, esteem,
And admiration ; lifting up a veil,
A sunbeam introducing among hearts
Retired and covert ; so that ye shall have
Clear images before your gladdened eyes
Of nature's unambitious underwood,
And flowers that prosper in the shade. And
when

I speak of such among my flock as swerved
Or fell, those only shall be singled out
Upon whose lapse, or error, something more
Than brotherly forgiveness may attend ;
To such will we restrict our notice, else
Better my tongue were mute.

And yet there are,

I feel, good reasons why we should not leave
Wholly untraced a more forbidding way.
For, strength to persevere and to support,
And energy to conquer and repel—
These elements of virtue, that declare
The native grandeur of the human soul—
Are oft-times not unprofitably shown
In the perverseness of a selfish course :
Truth every day exemplified, no less
In the grey cottage by the murmuring stream
Than in fantastic conqueror's roving camp,
Or 'mid the factious senate unappalled
Whoe'er may sink, or rise—to sink again,
As merciless proscription ebbs and flows.

There," said the Vicar, pointing as he spake,
"A woman rests in peace ; surpassed by few
In power of mind, and eloquent discourse.
Tall was her stature ; her complexion dark
And saturnine ; her head not raised to hold
Converse with heaven, nor yet deprest towards
earth,
But in projection carried, as she walked
For ever musing. Sunken were her eyes ;
Wrinkled and furrowed with habitual thought
Was her broad forehead ; like the brow of one
Whose visual nerve shrinks from a painful glare

Of overpowering light.—While yet a child,
She, 'mid the humble flowerets of the vale,
Towered like the imperial thistle, not unfurnished
With its appropriate grace, yet rather seeking
To be admired, than coveted and loved.
Even at that age she ruled, a sovereign queen,
Over her comrades ; else their simple sports,
Wanting all relish for her strenuous mind,
Had crossed her only to be shunned with scorn.
—Oh ! pang of sorrowful regret for those
Whom, in their youth, sweet study has enthralled,
That they have lived for harsher servitude,
Whether in soul, in body, or estate !
Such doom was hers ; yet nothing could subdue
Her keen desire of knowledge, nor efface
Those brighter images by books imprest
Upon her memory, faithfully as stars
That occupy their places, and, though oft
Hidden by clouds, and oft bedimmed by haze,
Are not to be extinguished, nor impaired.

Two passions, both degenerate, for they both
Began in honour, gradually obtained
Rule over her, and vexed her daily life ;
An unremitting, avaricious thrift ;
And a strange thralldom of maternal love,
That held her spirit, in its own despite,
Bound—by vexation, and regret, and scorn,
Constrained forgiveness, and relenting vows,
And tears, in pride suppressed, in shame concealed—

To a poor dissolute Son, her only child.
—Her wedded days had opened with mishap,
Whence dire dependence. What could she perform
To shake the burthen off ? Ah ! there was felt,
Indignantly, the weakness of her sex.
She mused, resolved, adhered to her resolve ;
The hand grew slack in alms-giving, the heart
Closed by degrees to charity ; heaven's blessing
Not seeking from that source, she placed her trust
In ceaseless pains—and strictest parsimony
Which sternly hoarded all that could be spared,
From each day's need, out of each day's least gain.

Thus all was re-established, and a pile
Constructed, that sufficed for every end,
Save the contentment of the builder's mind ;
A mind by nature indisposed to aught
So placid, so inactive, as content ;
A mind intolerant of lasting peace,
And cherishing the pang her heart deplored.
Dread life of conflict ! which I oft compared
To the agitation of a brook that runs
Down a rocky mountain, buried now and lost

In silent pools, now in strong eddies chained ;
But never to be charmed to gentleness :
Its best attainment fits of such repose
As timid eyes might shrink from fathoming.

A sudden illness seized her in the strength
Of life's autumnal season.—Shall I tell
How on her bed of death the Matron lay,
To Providence submissive, so she thought;
But fretted, vexed, and wrought upon, almost
To anger, by the malady that griped
Her prostrate frame with unrelaxing power,
As the fierce eagle fastens on the lamb ?
She prayed, she moaned ;—her husband's sister
watched

Her dreary pillow, waited on her needs ;
And yet the very sound of that kind foot
Was anguish to her ears ! 'And must she rule,'
This was the death-doomed Woman heard to say
In bitterness, 'and must she rule and reign,
'Sole Mistress of this house, when I am gone ?
'Tend what I tended, calling it her own !'
Enough ;—I fear, too much.—One vernal evening,
While she was yet in prime of health and strength,
I well remember, while I passed her door
Alone, with loitering step, and upward eye
Turned towards the planet Jupiter that hung
Above the centre of the Vale, a voice
Roused me, her voice ; it said, 'That glorious star
'In its untroubled element will shine
'As now it shines, when we are laid in earth
'And safe from all our sorrows.' With a sigh
She spake, yet, I believe, not unsustained
By faith in glory that shall far transcend
Aught by these perishable heavens disclosed
To sight or mind. Nor less than care divine
Is divine mercy. She, who had rebelled,
Was into meekness softened and subdued ;
Did, after trials not in vain prolonged,
With resignation sink into the grave ;
And her uncharitable acts, I trust,
And harsh unkindnesses are all forgiven,
Tho', in this Vale, remembered with deep awe."

THE Vicar paused ; and toward a seat advanced,
A long stone-seat, fixed in the Church-yard wall ;
Part shaded by cool sycamore, and part
Offering a sunny resting-place to them
Who seek the House of worship, while the bells
Yet ring with all their voices, or before
The last hath ceased its solitary knoll.
Beneath the shade we all sate down ; and there
His office, uninvited, he resumed.

"As on a sunny bank, a tender lamb
Lurks in safe shelter from the winds of March,
Screened by its parent, so that little mound
Lies guarded by its neighbour ; the small heap
Speaks for itself ; an Infant there doth rest ;
The sheltering hillock is the Mother's grave.
If mild discourse, and manners that conferred
A natural dignity on humblest rank ;
If gladsome spirits, and benignant looks,
That for a face not beautiful did more
Than beauty for the fairest face can do ;
And if religious tenderness of heart,
Grieving for sin, and penitential tears
Shed when the clouds had gathered and distained
The spotless ether of a maiden life ;
If these may make a hallowed spot of earth
More holy in the sight of God or Man ;
Then, o'er that mould, a sanctity shall brood
Till the stars sicken at the day of doom.

Ah ! what a warning for a thoughtless man,
Could field or grove, could any spot of earth,
Show to his eye an image of the pangs
Which it hath witnessed ; render back an echo
Of the sad steps by which it hath been trod !
There, by her innocent Baby's precious grave,
And on the very turf that roofs her own,
The Mother oft was seen to stand, or kneel
In the broad day, a weeping Magdalene.
Now she is not ; the swelling turf reports
Of the fresh shower, but of poor Ellen's tears
Is silent ; nor is any vestige left
Of the path worn by mournful tread of her
Who, at her heart's light bidding, once had moved
In virgin fearlessness, with step that seemed
Caught from the pressure of elastic turf
Upon the mountains gemmed with morning dew,
In the prime hour of sweetest scents and airs.
—Serious and thoughtful was her mind ; and yet,
By reconciliation exquisite and rare,
The form, port, motions, of this Cottage-girl
Were such as might have quickened and inspired
A Titian's hand, addrest to picture forth
Oread or Dryad glancing through the shade
What time the hunter's earliest horn is heard
Startling the golden hills.

A wide-spread elm
Stands in our valley, named THE JOYFUL TREE ;
From dateless usage which our peasants hold
Of giving welcome to the first of May
By dances round its trunk.—And if the sky
Permit, like honours, dance and song, are paid
To the Twelfth Night, beneath the frosty stars
Or the clear moon. The queen of these gay sports,

If not in beauty yet in sprightly air,
Was hapless Ellen.—No one touched the ground
So deftly, and the nicest maiden's locks
Less gracefully were braided ;—but this praise,
Methinks, would better suit another place.

She loved, and fondly deemed herself beloved.
—The road is dim, the current unperceived,
The weakness painful and most pitiful,
By which a virtuous woman, in pure youth,
May be delivered to distress and shame.
Such fate was hers.—The last time Ellen danced,
Among her equals, round *THE JOYFUL TREE*,
She bore a secret burthen ; and full soon
Was left to tremble for a breaking vow,—
Then, to bewail a sternly-broken vow,
Alone, within her widowed Mother's house.
It was the season of unfolding leaves,
Of days advancing toward their utmost length,
And small birds singing happily to mates
Happy as they. With spirit-saddening power
Winds pipe through fading woods ; but those blithe
notes

Strike the deserted to the heart ; I speak
Of what I know, and what we feel within.
—Beside the cottage in which Ellen dwelt
Stands a tall ash-tree ; to whose topmost twig
A thrush resorts, and annually chants,
At morn and evening from that naked perch,
While all the undergrove is thick with leaves,
A time-beguiling ditty, for delight
Of his fond partner, silent in the nest.
—‘Ah why,’ said Ellen, sighing to herself,
‘Why do not words, and kiss, and solemn pledge ;
‘And nature that is kind in woman's breast,
‘And reason that in man is wise and good,
‘And fear of him who is a righteous judge ;
‘Why do not these prevail for human life,
‘To keep two hearts together, that began
‘Their spring-time with one love, and that have need
‘Of mutual pity and forgiveness, sweet
‘To grant, or be received ; while that poor bird—
‘O come and hear him ! Thou who hast to me
‘Been faithless, hear him, though a lowly creature,
‘One of God's simple children that yet know not
‘The universal Parent, how he sings
‘As if he wished the firmament of heaven
‘Should listen, and give back to him the voice
‘Of his triumphant constancy and love ;
‘The proclamation that he makes, how far
‘His darkness doth transcend our fickle light !’

Such was the tender passage, not by me
Repeated without loss of simple phrase,

Which I perused, even as the words had been
Committed by forsaken Ellen's hand
To the blank margin of a Valentine,
Bedropped with tears. ‘Twill please you to be told
That, studiously withdrawing from the eye
Of all companionship, the Sufferer yet
In lonely reading found a meek resource :
How thankful for the warmth of summer days,
When she could slip into the cottage-barn,
And find a secret oratory there ;
Or, in the garden, under friendly veil
Of their long twilight, pore upon her book
By the last lingering help of the open sky
Until dark night dismissed her to her bed !
Thus did a waking fancy sometimes lose
The unconquerable pang of despised love.

A kindlier passion opened on her soul
When that poor Child was born. Upon its face
She gazed as on a pure and spotless gift
Of unexpected promise, where a grief
Or dread was all that had been thought of,—joy
Far livelier than bewildered traveller feels,
Amid a perilous waste that all night long
Hath harassed him toiling through fearful storm,
When he beholds the first pale speck serene
Of day-spring, in the gloomy east, revealed,
And greets it with thanksgiving. ‘Till this hour,’
Thus, in her Mother's hearing Ellen spake,
‘There was a stony region in my heart ;
‘But He, at whose command the parched rock
‘Was smitten, and poured forth a quenching stream,
‘Hath softened that obduracy, and made
‘Unlooked-for gladness in the desert place,
‘To save the perishing ; and, henceforth, I breathe
‘The air with cheerful spirit, for thy sake
‘My Infant ! and for that good Mother dear,
‘Who bore me ; and hath prayed for me in vain ;—
‘Yet not in vain ; it shall not be in vain.’
She spake, nor was the assurance unfulfilled ;
And if heart-rending thoughts would oft return,
They stayed not long.—The blameless Infant grew ;
The Child whom Ellen and her Mother loved
They soon were proud of ; tended it and nursed ;
A soothing comforter, although forlorn ;
Like a poor singing-bird from distant lands ;
Or a choice shrub, which he, who passes by
With vacant mind, not seldom may observe
Fair-flowering in a thinly-peopled house,
Whose window, somewhat sadly, it adorns.

Through four months' space the Infant drew its
food
From the maternal breast ; then scruples rose ;

Thoughts, which the rich are free from, came and crossed

The fond affection. She no more could bear
By her offence to lay a twofold weight
On a kind parent willing to forget
Their slender means: so, to that parent's care
Trusting her child, she left their common home,
And undertook with dutiful content
A Foster-mother's office.

'Tis, perchance,

Unknown to you that in these simple vales
The natural feeling of equality
Is by domestic service unimpaired;
Yet, though such service be, with us, removed
From sense of degradation, not the less
The ungentle mind can easily find means
To impose severe restraints and laws unjust,
Which hapless Ellen now was doomed to feel:
For (blinded by an over-anxious dread
Of such excitement and divided thought
As with her office would but ill accord)
The pair, whose infant she was bound to nurse,
Forbad her all communion with her own:
Week after week, the mandate they enforced.
—So near! yet not allowed, upon that sight
To fix her eyes—alas! 'twas hard to bear!
But worse affliction must be borne—far worse;
For 'tis Heaven's will—that, after a disease
Begun and ended within three days' space,
Her child should die; as Ellen now exclaimed,
Her own—deserted child!—Once, only once,
She saw it in that mortal malady;
And, on the burial-day, could scarcely gain
Permission to attend its obsequies.
She reached the house, last of the funeral train;
And some one, as she entered, having chanced
To urge unthinkingly their prompt departure,
'Nay,' said she, with commanding look, a spirit
Of anger never seen in her before,
'Nay, ye must wait my time!' and down she sate,
And by the unclosed coffin kept her seat
Weeping and looking, looking on and weeping,
Upon the last sweet slumber of her Child,
Until at length her soul was satisfied.

You see the Infant's Grave; and to this spot,
The Mother, oft as she was sent abroad,
On whatsoever errand, urged her steps:
Hither she came; here stood, and sometimes knelt
In the broad day, a rueful Magdalene!
So call her; for not only she bewailed
A mother's loss, but mourned in bitterness
Her own transgression; penitent sincere
As ever raised to heaven a streaming eye!

—At length the parents of the foster-child,
Noting that in despite of their commands
She still renewed and could not but renew
Those visitations, ceased to send her forth;
Or, to the garden's narrow bounds, confined.
I failed not to remind them that they erred;
For holy Nature might not thus be crossed,
Thus wronged in woman's breast: in vain I pleaded—
But the green stalk of Ellen's life was snapped,
And the flower drooped; as every eye could see,
It hung its head in mortal languishment.
—Aided by this appearance, I at length
Prevailed; and, from those bonds released, she went
Home to her mother's house.

The Youth was fled;

The rash betrayer could not face the shame
Or sorrow which his senseless guilt had caused;
And little would his presence, or proof given
Of a relenting soul, have now availed;
For, like a shadow, he was passed away
From Ellen's thoughts; had perished to her mind
For all concerns of fear, or hope, or love,
Save only those which to their common shame,
And to his moral being appertained:
Hope from that quarter would, I know, have brought
A heavenly comfort; there she recognised
An unrelaxing bond, a mutual need;
There, and, as seemed, there only.

She had built,

Her fond maternal heart had built, a nest
In blindness all too near the river's edge;
That work a summer flood with hasty swell
Had swept away; and now her Spirit longed
For its last flight to heaven's security.
—The bodily frame wasted from day to day;
Meanwhile, relinquishing all other cares,
Her mind she strictly tutored to find peace
And pleasure in endurance. Much she thought,
And much she read; and brooded feelingly
Upon her own unworthiness. To me,
As to a spiritual comforter and friend,
Her heart she opened; and no pains were spared
To mitigate, as gently as I could,
The sting of self-reproach, with healing words.
Meek Saint! through patience glorified on earth!
In whom, as by her lonely hearth she sate,
The ghastly face of cold decay put on
A sun-like beauty, and appeared divine!
May I not mention—that, within those walls,
In due observance of her pious wish,
The congregation joined with me in prayer
For her soul's good? Nor was that office vain.
—Much did she suffer: but, if any friend,
Beholding her condition, at the sight

Gave way to words of pity or complaint,
 She stilled them with a prompt reproof, and said,
 'He who afflicts me knows what I can bear ;
 'And, when I fail, and can endure no more,
 'Will mercifully take me to himself.'
 So, through the cloud of death, her Spirit passed
 Into that pure and unknown world of love
 Where injury cannot come :—and here is laid
 The mortal Body by her Infant's side."

The Vicar ceased; and downcast looks made known
 That each had listened with his inmost heart.
 For me, the emotion scarcely was less strong
 Or less benign than that which I had felt
 When seated near my venerable Friend,
 Under those shady elms, from him I heard
 The story that retraced the slow decline
 Of Margaret, sinking on the lonely heath
 With the neglected house to which she clung.
 —I noted that the Solitary's cheek
 Confessed the power of nature.—Pleased though sad,
 More pleased than sad, the grey-haired Wanderer
 sate ;

Thanks to his pure imaginative soul
 Capacious and serene ; his blameless life,
 His knowledge, wisdom, love of truth, and love
 Of human kind ! He was it who first broke
 The pensive silence, saying :—

"Blest are they
 Whose sorrow rather is to suffer wrong
 Than to do wrong, albeit themselves have erred.
 This tale gives proof that Heaven most gently deals
 With such, in their affliction.—Ellen's fate,
 Her tender spirit, and her contrite heart,
 Call to my mind dark hints which I have heard
 Of one who died within this vale, by doom
 Heavier, as his offence was heavier far.
 Where, Sir, I pray you, where are laid the bones
 Of Wilfred Armathwaite ?"

The Vicar answered,
 "In that green nook, close by the Church-yard wall,
 Beneath yon hawthorn, planted by myself
 In memory and for warning, and in sign
 Of sweetness where dire anguish had been known,
 Of reconciliation after deep offence—
 There doth he rest. No theme his fate supplies
 For the smooth glozings of the indulgent world ;
 Nor need the windings of his devious course
 Be here retraced ;—enough that, by mishap
 And venial error, robbed of competence,
 And her obsequious shadow, peace of mind,
 He craved a substitute in troubled joy ;
 Against his conscience rose in arms, and, braving
 Divine displeasure, broke the marriage-vow.

That which he had been weak enough to do
 Was misery in remembrance ; he was stung,
 Stung by his inward thoughts, and by the smiles
 Of wife and children stung to agony.
 Wretched at home, he gained no peace abroad ;
 Ranged through the mountains, slept upon the earth,
 Asked comfort of the open air, and found
 No quiet in the darkness of the night,
 No pleasure in the beauty of the day.
 His flock he slighted : his paternal fields
 Became a clog to him, whose spirit wished
 To fly—but whither ! And this gracious Church,
 That wears a look so full of peace and hope
 And love, benignant mother of the vale,
 How fair amid her brood of cottages !
 She was to him a sickness and reproach.
 Much to the last remained unknown : but this
 Is sure, that through remorse and grief he died ;
 Though pitied among men, absolved by God,
 He could not find forgiveness in himself ;
 Nor could endure the weight of his own shame.

Here rests a Mother. But from her I turn
 And from her grave.—Behold—upon that ridge,
 That, stretching boldly from the mountain side,
 Carries into the centre of the vale
 Its rocks and woods—the Cottage where she dwelt ;
 And where yet dwells her faithful Partner, left
 (Full eight years past) the solitary prop
 Of many helpless Children. I begin
 With words that might be prelude to a tale
 Of sorrow and dejection ; but I feel
 No sadness, when I think of what mine eyes
 See daily in that happy family.
 —Bright garland form they for the pensive brow
 Of their undrooping Father's widowhood,
 Those six fair Daughters, budding yet—not one,
 Not one of all the band, a full-blown flower.
 Deprest, and desolate of soul, as once
 That Father was, and filled with anxious fear,
 Now, by experience taught, he stands assured,
 That God, who takes away, yet takes not half
 Of what he seems to take ; or gives it back,
 Not to our prayer, but far beyond our prayer ;
 He gives it—the boon produce of a soil
 Which our endeavours have refused to till,
 And hope hath never watered. The Abode,
 Whose grateful owner can attest these truths,
 Even were the object nearer to our sight,
 Would seem in no distinction to surpass
 The rudest habitations. Ye might think
 That it had sprung self-raised from earth, or grown
 Out of the living rock, to be adorned
 By nature only ; but, if thither led,

Ye would discover, then, a studious work
Of many fancies, prompting many hands.

Brought from the woods the honeysuckle twines
Around the porch, and seems; in that trim place,
A plant no longer wild; the cultured rose
There blossoms, strong in health, and will be soon
Roof-high; the wild pink crowns the garden-wall,
And with the flowers are intermingled stones
Sparry and bright, rough scatterings of the hills.
These ornaments, that fade not with the year,
A hardy Girl continues to provide;
Who, mounting fearlessly the rocky heights,
Her Father's prompt attendant, does for him
All that a boy could do, but with delight
More keen and prouder daring; yet hath she,
Within the garden, like the rest, a bed
For her own flowers and favourite herbs, a space,
By sacred charter, holden for her use.
—These, and whatever else the garden bears
Of fruit or flower, permission asked or not,
I freely gather; and my leisure draws
A not unfrequent pastime from the hum

Of bees around their range of sheltered hives
Busy in that enclosure; while the rill,
That sparkling thrids the rocks, attunes his voice
To the pure course of human life which there
Flows on in solitude. But, when the gloom
Of night is falling round my steps, then most
This Dwelling charms me; often I stop short,
(Who could refrain?) and feed by stealth my sight
With prospect of the company within,
Laid open through the blazing window:—there
I see the eldest Daughter at her wheel
Spinning amain, as if to overtake
The never-halting time; or, in her turn,
Teaching some Novice of the sisterhood
That skill in this or other household work,
Which, from her Father's honoured hand, herself,
While she was yet a little-one, had learned.
Mild Man! he is not gay, but they are gay;
And the whole house seems filled with gaiety.
—Thrice happy, then, the Mother may be deemed,
The Wife, from whose consolatory grave
I turned, that ye in mind might witness where,
And how, her Spirit yet survives on earth!"

BOOK SEVENTH.

THE CHURCH-YARD AMONG THE MOUNTAINS

CONTINUED.

ARGUMENT.

Impression of these Narratives upon the Author's mind
—Pastor invited to give account of certain Graves that
lie apart—Clergyman and his Family—Fortunate
influence of change of situation—Activity in extreme
old age—Another Clergyman, a character of resolute
Virtue—Lamentations over mis-directed applause—
Instance of less exalted excellence in a deaf man—
Elevated character of a blind man—Reflection upon
Blindness—Interrupted by a Peasant who passes—
his animal cheerfulness and careless vivacity—He
occasions a digression on the fall of beautiful and in-
teresting Trees—A female Infant's Grave—Joy at her
Birth—Sorrow at her Departure—A youthful Peasant
—his patriotic enthusiasm and distinguished qualities
—his untimely death—Exultation of the Wanderer,
as a patriot, in this Picture—Solitary how affected—
Monument of a Knight—Traditions concerning him—
Peroration of the Wanderer on the transitoriness of
things and the revolutions of society—Hints at his
own past Calling—Thanks the Pastor.

WHILE thus from theme to theme the Historian
passed,

The words he uttered, and the scene that lay
Before our eyes, awakened in my mind
Vivid remembrance of those long-past hours;
When, in the hollow of some shadowy vale,
(What time the splendour of the setting sun
Lay beautiful on Snowdon's sovereign brow,
On Cader Idris, or huge Penmaenmaur)
A wandering Youth, I listened with delight
To pastoral melody or warlike air,
Drawn from the chords of the ancient British harp
By some accomplished Master, while he sate
Amid the quiet of the green recess,
And there did inexhaustibly dispense
An interchange of soft or solemn tunes,
Tender or blithe; now, as the varying mood
Of his own spirit urged,—now, as a voice
From youth or maiden, or some honoured chief
Of his compatriot villagers (that hung
Around him, drinking in the impassioned notes
Of the time-hallowed minstrelsy) required
For their heart's ease or pleasure. Strains of power

Were they, to seize and occupy the sense ;
But to a higher mark than song can reach
Rose this pure eloquence. And, when the stream
Which overflowed the soul was passed away,
A consciousness remained that it had left,
Deposited upon the silent shore
Of memory, images and precious thoughts,
That shall not die, and cannot be destroyed.

"These grassy heaps lie amicably close,"
Said I, "like surges heaving in the wind
Along the surface of a mountain pool :
Whence comes it, then, that yonder we behold
Five graves, and only five, that rise together
Unsociably sequestered, and encroaching
On the smooth play-ground of the village-school?"

The Vicar answered,—“No disdainful pride
In them who rest beneath, nor any course
Of strange or tragic accident, hath helped
To place those hillocks in that lonely guise.
—Once more look forth, and follow with your sight
The length of road that from yon mountain’s base
Through bare enclosures stretches, ’till its line
Is lost within a little tuft of trees ;
Then, reappearing in a moment, quits
The cultured fields ; and up the heathy waste,
Mounts, as you see, in mazes serpentine,
Led towards an easy outlet of the vale.
That little shady spot, that sylvan tuft,
By which the road is hidden, also hides
A cottage from our view ; though I discern
(Ye scarcely can) amid its sheltering trees
The smokeless chimney-top.—

All unembowered

And naked stood that lowly Parsonage
(For such in truth it is, and appertains
To a small Chapel in the vale beyond)
When hither came its last Inhabitant.
Rough and forbidding were the choicest roads
By which our northern wilds could then be crossed ;
And into most of these secluded vales
Was no access for wain, heavy or light.
So, at his dwelling-place the Priest arrived
With store of household goods, in panniers slung
On sturdy horses graced with jingling bells,
And on the back of more ignoble beast ;
That, with like burthen of effects most prized
Or easiest carried, closed the motley train.
Young was I then, a school-boy of eight years ;
But still, methinks, I see them as they passed
In order, drawing toward their wished-for home.
—Rocked by the motion of a trusty ass
Two ruddy children hung, a well-poised freight,

Each in his basket nodding drowsily ;
Their bonnets, I remember, wreathed with flowers,
Which told it was the pleasant month of June ;
And, close behind, the comely Matron rode,
A woman of soft speech and gracious smile,
And with a lady’s mien.—From far they came,
Even from Northumbrian hills ; yet theirs had
been

A merry journey, rich in pastime, cheered
By music, prank, and laughter-stirring jest ;
And freak put on, and arch word dropped—to
swell

The cloud of fancy and uncouth surmise
That gathered round the slowly-moving train.
—‘Whence do they come ? and with what errand
charged ?

‘Belong they to the fortune-telling tribe
‘Who pitch their tents under the green-wood tree?
‘Or Strollers are they, furnished to enact
‘Fair Rosamond, and the Children of the Wood,
‘And, by that whiskered tabby’s aid, set forth
‘The lucky venture of sage Whittington,
‘When the next village hears the show announced
‘By blast of trumpet ?’ Plenteous was the growth
Of such conjectures, overheard, or seen
On many a staring countenance portrayed
Of boor or burgher, as they marched along.
And more than once their steadiness of face
Was put to proof, and exercise supplied
To their inventive humour, by stern looks,
And questions in authoritative tone,
From some staid guardian of the public peace,
Checking the sober steed on which he rode,
In his suspicious wisdom ; oftener still,
By notice indirect, or blunt demand
From traveller halting in his own despite,
A simple curiosity to ease :
Of which adventures, that beguiled and cheered
Their grave migration, the good pair would tell,
With undiminished glee, in hoary age.

A Priest he was by function ; but his course
From his youth up, and high as manhood’s noon,
(The hour of life to which he then was brought)
Had been irregular, I might say, wild ;
By books unsteadied, by his pastoral care
Too little checked. An active, ardent mind ;
A fancy pregnant with resource and scheme
To cheat the sadness of a rainy day ;
Hands apt for all ingenious arts and games ;
A generous spirit, and a body strong
To cope with stoutest champions of the bowl ;
Had earned for him sure welcome, and the rights
Of a prized visitant, in the jolly hall

Of country 'squire ; or at the statelier board
Of duke or earl, from scenes of courtly pomp
Withdrawn,—to while away the summer hours
In condescension among rural guests.

With these high comrades he had revelled long,
Frolicked industriously, a simple Clerk
By hopes of coming patronage beguiled
Till the heart sickened. So, each loftier aim
Abandoning and all his showy friends,
For a life's stay (slender it was, but sure)
He turned to this secluded chapelry ;
That had been offered to his doubtful choice
By an unthought-of patron. Bleak and bare
They found the cottage, their allotted home ;
Naked without, and rude within ; a spot
With which the Cure not long had been endowed :
And far remote the chapel stood,—remote,
And, from his Dwelling, unapproachable,
Save through a gap high in the hills, an opening
Shadeless and shelterless, by driving showers
Frequented, and beset with howling winds.
Yet cause was none, whate'er regret might hang
On his own mind, to quarrel with the choice
Or the necessity that fixed him here ;
Apart from old temptations, and constrained
To punctual labour in his sacred charge.
See him a constant preacher to the poor !
And visiting, though not with saintly zeal,
Yet, when need was, with no reluctant will,
The sick in body, or distress in mind ;
And, by as salutary change, compelled
To rise from timely sleep, and meet the day
With no engagement, in his thoughts, more proud
Or splendid than his garden could afford,
His fields, or mountains by the heath-cock ranged,
Or the wild brooks ; from which he now returned
Contented to partake the quiet meal
Of his own board, where sat his gentle Mate
And three fair Children, plentifully fed
Though simply, from their little household farm ;
Nor wanted timely treat of fish or fowl
By nature yielded to his practised hand ;—
To help the small but certain comings-in
Of that spare benefice. Yet not the less
Theirs was a hospitable board, and theirs
A charitable door.

So days and years
Passed on ;—the inside of that rugged house
Was trimmed and brightened by the Matron's care,
And gradually enriched with things of price,
Which might be lacked for use or ornament.
What, though no soft and costly sofa there
Insidiously stretched out its lazy length,

And no vain mirror glittered upon the walls,
Yet were the windows of the low abode
By shutters weather-fenced, which at once
Repelled the storm and deadened its loud roar.
There snow-white curtains hung in decent folds ;
Tough moss, and long-enduring mountain plants,
That creep along the ground with sinuous trail,
Were nicely braided ; and composed a work
Like Indian mats, that with appropriate grace
Lay at the threshold and the inner doors ;
And a fair carpet, woven of homespun wool
But tintured daintily with florid hues,
For seemliness and warmth, on festal days,
Covered the smooth blue slabs of mountain-stone
With which the parlour-floor, in simplest guise
Of pastoral homesteads, had been long inlaid.

Those pleasing works the Housewife's skill
produced :

Meanwhile the unsedentary Master's hand
Was busier with his task—to rid, to plant,
To rear for food, for shelter, and delight ;
A thriving covert ! And when wishes, formed
In youth, and sanctioned by the riper mind,
Restored me to my native valley, here
To end my days ; well pleased was I to see
The once-bare cottage, on the mountain-side,
Screen'd from assault of every bitter blast ;
While the dark shadows of the summer leaves
Danced in the breeze, chequering its mossy roof.
Time, which had thus afforded willing help
To beautify with nature's fairest growths
This rustic tenement, had gently shed,
Upon its Master's frame, a wintry grace ;
The comeliness of unenfeebled age.

But how could I say, gently ? for he still
Retained a flashing eye, a burning palm,
A stirring foot, a head which beat at nights
Upon its pillow with a thousand schemes.
Few likings had he dropped, few pleasures lost ;
Generous and charitable, prompt to serve ;
And still his harsher passions kept their hold—
Anger and indignation. Still he loved
The sound of titled names, and talked in glee
Of long-past banquetings with high-born friends :
Then, from those lulling fits of vain delight
Uproused by recollected injury, railed
At their false ways disdainfully,—and oft
In bitterness, and with a threatening eye
Of fire, incensed beneath its hoary brow.
—Those transports, with staid looks of pure good-
will,
And with soft smile, his consort would reprove.

She, far behind him in the race of years,
 Yet keeping her first mildness, was advanced
 Far nearer, in the habit of her soul,
 To that still region whither all are bound.
 Him might we liken to the setting sun
 As seen not seldom on some gusty day,
 Struggling and bold, and shining from the west
 With an inconstant and unmellowed light ;
 She was a soft attendant cloud, that hung
 As if with wish to veil the restless orb ;
 From which it did itself imbibe a ray
 Of pleasing lustre.—But no more of this ;
 I better love to sprinkle on the sod
 That now divides the pair, or rather say,
 That still unites them, praises, like heaven's dew,
 Without reserve descending upon both.

Our very first in eminence of years
 This old Man stood, the patriarch of the Vale !
 And, to his unmolested mansion, death
 Had never come, through space of forty years ;
 Sparing both old and young in that abode.
 Suddenly then they disappeared : not twice
 Had summer scorched the fields ; not twice had
 fallen,

On those high peaks, the first autumnal snow,
 Before the greedy visiting was closed,
 And the long-privileged house left empty—swept
 As by a plague. Yet no rapacious plague
 Had been among them ; all was gentle death,
 One after one, with intervals of peace.
 A happy consummation ! an accord
 Sweet, perfect, to be wished for ! save that here
 Was something which to mortal sense might sound
 Like harshness,—that the old grey-headed Sire,
 The oldest, he was taken last, survived
 When the meek Partner of his age, his Son,
 His Daughter, and that late and high-prized gift,
 His little smiling Grandchild, were no more.

‘ All gone, all vanished ! he deprived and bare,
 ‘ How will he face the remnant of his life ?
 ‘ What will become of him ? ’ we said, and mused
 In sad conjectures—‘ Shall we meet him now
 ‘ Haunting with rod and line the craggy brooks ?
 ‘ Or shall we overhear him, as we pass,
 ‘ Striving to entertain the lonely hours
 ‘ With music ? ’ (for he had not ceased to touch
 The harp or viol which himself had framed,
 For their sweet purposes, with perfect skill.)
 ‘ What titles will he keep ? will he remain
 ‘ Musician, gardener, builder, mechanist,
 ‘ A planter, and a rearer from the seed ?
 ‘ A man of hope and forward-looking mind

‘ Even to the last ! ’—Such was he, unsubdued.
 But Heaven was gracious ; yet a little while,
 And this Survivor, with his cheerful throng
 Of open projects, and his inward hoard
 Of unsunned griefs, too many and too keen,
 Was overcome by unexpected sleep,
 In one blest moment. Like a shadow thrown
 Softly and lightly from a passing cloud,
 Death fell upon him, while reclined he lay
 For noontide solace on the summer grass,
 The warm lap of his mother earth : and so,
 Their lenient term of separation past,
 That family (whose graves you there behold)
 By yet a higher privilege once more
 Were gathered to each other.”

Calm of mind

And silence waited on these closing words ;
 Until the Wanderer (whether moved by fear
 Lest in those passages of life were some
 That might have touched the sick heart of his Friend
 Too nearly, or intent to reinforce
 His own firm spirit in degree deprest
 By tender sorrow for our mortal state)
 Thus silence broke :—“ Behold a thoughtless Man
 From vice and premature decay preserved
 By useful habits, to a fitter soil
 Transplanted ere too late.—The hermit, lodged
 Amid the untrodden desert, tells his beads,
 With each repeating its allotted prayer
 And thus divides and thus relieves the time ;
 Smooth task, with *his* compared, whose mind could
 string,

Not scantily, bright minutes on the thread
 Of keen domestic anguish ; and beguile
 A solitude, unchosen, unprofessed ;
 Till gentlest death released him.

Far from us

Be the desire—too curiously to ask
 How much of this is but the blind result
 Of cordial spirits and vital temperament,
 And what to higher powers is justly due.
 But you, Sir, know that in a neighbouring vale
 A Priest abides before whose life such doubts
 Fall to the ground ; whose gifts of nature lie
 Retired from notice, lost in attributes
 Of reason, honourably effaced by debts
 Which her poor treasure-house is content to owe,
 And conquests over her dominion gained,
 To which her frowardness must needs submit.
 In this one Man is shown a temperance—proof
 Against all trials ; industry severe
 And constant as the motion of the day ;
 Stern self-denial round him spread, with shade
 That might be deemed forbidding, did not there

All generous feelings flourish and rejoice ;
 Forbearance, charity in deed and thought,
 And resolution competent to take
 Out of the bosom of simplicity
 All that her holy customs recommend,
 And the best ages of the world prescribe.
 —Preaching, administering, in every work
 Of his sublime vocation, in the walks
 Of worldly intercourse between man and man,
 And in his humble dwelling, he appears
 A labourer, with moral virtue girt,
 With spiritual graces, like a glory, crowned.”

“Doubt can be none,” the Pastor said, “for whom

This portraiture is sketched. The great, the good,
 The well-beloved, the fortunate, the wise,—
 These titles emperors and chiefs have borne,
 Honour assumed or given: and him, the WONDERFUL,
 Our simple shepherds, speaking from the heart,
 Deservedly have styled.—From his abode
 In a dependent chapelry that lies
 Behind yon hill, a poor and rugged wild,
 Which in his soul he lovingly embraced,
 And, having once espoused, would never quit ;
 Into its graveyard will ere long be borne
 That lowly, great, good Man. A simple stone
 May cover him ; and by its help, perchance,
 A century shall hear his name pronounced,
 With images attendant on the sound ;
 Then, shall the slowly-gathering twilight close
 In utter night ; and of his course remain
 No cognizable vestiges, no more
 Than of this breath, which shapes itself in words
 To speak of him, and instantly dissolves.”

The Pastor pressed by thoughts which round his theme

Still linger'd, after a brief pause, resumed ;
 “Noise is there not enough in doleful war,
 But that the heaven-born poet must stand forth,
 And lend the echoes of his sacred shell,
 To multiply and aggravate the din ?
 Pangs are there not enough in hopeless love—
 And, in requited passion, all too much
 Of turbulence, anxiety, and fear—
 But that the minstrel of the rural shade
 Must tune his pipe, insidiously to nurse
 The perturbation in the suffering breast,
 And propagate its kind, far as he may ?
 —Ah who (and with such rapture as befits
 The hallowed theme) will rise and celebrate
 The good man's purposes and deeds ; retrace
 His struggles, his discomfitures deplore,

His triumphs hail, and glorify his end ;
 That virtue, like the fumes and vapoury clouds
 Through fancy's heat redounding in the brain,
 And like the soft infections of the heart,
 By charm of measured words may spread o'er field,
 Hamlet, and town ; and piety survive
 Upon the lips of men in hall or bower ;
 Not for reproof, but high and warm delight,
 And grave encouragement, by song inspired !
 —Vain thought ! but wherefore murmur or repine ?
 The memory of the just survives in heaven :
 And, without sorrow, will the ground receive
 That venerable clay. Meanwhile the best
 Of what lies here confines us to degrees
 In excellence less difficult to reach,
 And milder worth : nor need we travel far
 From those to whom our last regards were paid,
 For such example.

Almost at the root
 Of that tall pine, the shadow of whose bare
 And slender stem, while here I sit at eve,
 Oft stretches toward me, like a long straight path
 Traced faintly in the greensward ; there, beneath
 A plain blue stone, a gentle Dalesman lies,
 From whom, in early childhood, was withdrawn
 The precious gift of hearing. He grew up
 From year to year in loneliness of soul ;
 And this deep mountain-valley was to him
 Soundless, with all its streams. The bird of dawn
 Did never rouse this Cottager from sleep
 With startling summons ; not for his delight
 The vernal cuckoo shouted ; not for him
 Murmured the labouring bee. When stormy winds
 Were working the broad bosom of the lake
 Into a thousand thousand sparkling waves,
 Rocking the trees, or driving cloud on cloud
 Along the sharp edge of yon lofty crags,
 The agitated scene before his eye
 Was silent as a picture : evermore
 Were all things silent, wheresoe'er he moved.
 Yet, by the solace of his own pure thoughts
 Upheld, he duteously pursued the round
 Of rural labours ; the steep mountain-side
 Ascended, with his staff and faithful dog ;
 The plough he guided, and the scythe he swayed ;
 And the ripe corn before his sickle fell
 Among the jocund reapers. For himself,
 All watchful and industrious as he was,
 He wrought not : neither field nor flock he owned ;
 No wish for wealth had place within his mind ;
 Nor husband's love, nor father's hope or care.

Though born a younger brother, need was none
 That from the floor of his paternal home

He should depart, to plant himself anew.
 And when, mature in manhood, he beheld
 His parents laid in earth, no loss ensued
 Of rights to him; but he remained well pleased,
 By the pure bond of independent love,
 An inmate of a second family;
 The fellow-labourer and friend of him
 To whom the small inheritance had fallen.
 —Nor deem that his mild presence was a weight
 That pressed upon his brother's house; for books
 Were ready comrades whom he could not tire;
 Of whose society the blameless Man
 Was never satiate. Their familiar voice,
 Even to old age, with unabated charm
 Beguiled his leisure hours; refreshed his thoughts;
 Beyond its natural elevation raised
 His introverted spirit; and bestowed
 Upon his life an outward dignity
 Which all acknowledged. The dark winter night,
 The stormy day, each had its own resource;
 Song of the muses, sage historic tale,
 Science severe, or word of holy Writ
 Announcing immortality and joy
 To the assembled spirits of just men
 Made perfect, and from injury secure.
 —Thus soothed at home, thus busy in the field,
 To no perverse suspicion he gave way,
 No languor, peevishness, nor vain complaint:
 And they, who were about him, did not fail
 In reverence, or in courtesy; they prized
 His gentle manners: and his peaceful smiles,
 The gleams of his slow-varying countenance,
 Were met with answering sympathy and love.

At length, when sixty years and five were told,
 A slow disease insensibly consumed
 The powers of nature: and a few short steps
 Of friends and kindred bore him from his home
 (Yon cottage shaded by the woody crags)
 To the profounder stillness of the grave.
 —Nor was his funeral denied the grace
 Of many tears, virtuous and thoughtful grief;
 Heart-sorrow rendered sweet by gratitude.
 And now that monumental stone preserves
 His name, and unambitiously relates
 How long, and by what kindly outward aids,
 And in what pure contentedness of mind,
 The sad privation was by him endured.
 —And yon tall pine-tree, whose composing sound
 Was wasted on the good Man's living ear,
 Hath now its own peculiar sanctity;
 And, at the touch of every wandering breeze,
 Murmurs, not idly, o'er his peaceful grave.

Soul-cheering Light, most bountiful of things!
 Guide of our way, mysterious comforter!
 Whose sacred influence, spread through earth and
 heaven,

We all too thanklessly participate,
 Thy gifts were utterly withheld from him
 Whose place of rest is near yon ivied porch.
 Yet, of the wild brooks ask if he complained;
 Ask of the channelled rivers if they held
 A safer, easier, more determined, course.
 What terror doth it strike into the mind
 To think of one, blind and alone, advancing
 Straight toward some precipice's airy brink!
 But, timely warned, *He* would have stayed his steps,
 Protected, say enlightened, by his ear;
 And on the very edge of vacancy
 Not more endangered than a man whose eye
 Beholds the gulf beneath.—No floweret blooms
 Throughout the lofty range of these rough hills,
 Nor in the woods, that could from him conceal
 Its birth-place; none whose figure did not live
 Upon his touch. The bowels of the earth
 Enriched with knowledge his industrious mind;
 The ocean paid him tribute from the stores
 Lodged in her bosom; and, by science led,
 His genius mounted to the plains of heaven.
 —Methinks I see him—how his eye-balls rolled,
 Beneath his ample brow, in darkness paired,—
 But each instinct with spirit; and the frame
 Of the whole countenance alive with thought,
 Fancy, and understanding; while the voice
 Discoursed of natural or moral truth
 With eloquence, and such authentic power,
 That, in his presence, humbler knowledge stood
 Abashed, and tender pity overawed.”

“A noble—and, to unreflecting minds,
 A marvellous spectacle,” the Wanderer said,
 “Beings like these present! But proof abounds
 Upon the earth that faculties, which seem
 Extinguished, do not, *therefore*, cease to be.
 And to the mind among her powers of sense
 This transfer is permitted,—not alone
 That the bereft their recompense may win;
 But for remoter purposes of love
 And charity; nor last nor least for this,
 That to the imagination may be given
 A type and shadow of an awful truth;
 How, likewise, under sufferance divine,
 Darkness is banished from the realms of death,
 By man's imperishable spirit, quelled.
 Unto the men who see not as we see
 Futurity was thought, in ancient times,
 To be laid open, and they prophesied.

And know we not that from the blind have flowed
The highest, holiest, raptures of the lyre;
And wisdom married to immortal verse?"

Among the humbler Worthies, at our feet
Lying insensible to human praise,
Love, or regret,—*whose* lineaments would next
Have been portrayed, I guess not; but it chanced
That, near the quiet church-yard where we sate,
A team of horses, with a ponderous freight
Pressing behind, adown a rugged slope,
Whose sharp descent confounded their array,
Came at that moment, ringing noisily.

"Here," said the Pastor, "do we muse, and mourn
The waste of death; and lo! the giant oak
Stretched on his bier—that massy timber wain;
Nor fail to note the Man who guides the team."

He was a peasant of the lowest class:
Grey locks profusely round his temples hung
In clustering curls, like ivy, which the bite
Of winter cannot thin; the fresh air lodged
Within his cheek, as light within a cloud;
And he returned our greeting with a smile.
When he had passed, the Solitary spake;
"A Man he seems of cheerful yesterdays
And confident to-morrows; with a face
Not worldly-minded, for it bears too much
Of Nature's impress,—gaiety and health,
Freedom and hope; but keen, withal, and shrewd.
His gestures note,—and hark! his tones of voice
Are all vivacious as his mien and looks."

The Pastor answered. "You have read him well.
Year after year is added to his store
With *silent* increase: summers, winters—past,
Past or to come; yea, boldly might I say,
Ten summers and ten winters of a space
That lies beyond life's ordinary bounds,
Upon his sprightly vigour cannot fix
The obligation of an anxious mind,
A pride in having, or a fear to lose;
Possessed like outskirts of some large domain,
By any one more thought of than by him
Who holds the land in fee, its careless lord!
Yet is the creature rational, endowed
With foresight; hears, too, every sabbath day,
The christian promise with attentive ear;
Nor will, I trust, the Majesty of Heaven
Reject the incense offered up by him,
Though of the kind which beasts and birds present
In grove or pasture; cheerfulness of soul,
From trepidation and repining free.

How many scrupulous worshippers fall down
Upon their knees, and daily homage pay
Less worthy, less religious even, than his!

This qualified respect, the old Man's due,
Is paid without reluctance; but in truth,"
(Said the good Vicar with a fond half-smile)
"I feel at times a motion of despite
Towards one, whose bold contrivances and skill,
As you have seen, bear such conspicuous part
In works of havoc; taking from these vales,
One after one, their proudest ornaments.
Full oft his doings leave me to deplore
Tall ash-tree, sown by winds, by vapours nursed,
In the dry crannies of the pendent rocks;
Light birch, aloft upon the horizon's edge,
A veil of glory for the ascending moon;
And oak whose roots by noontide dew were damped,
And on whose forehead inaccessible
The raven lodged in safety.—Many a ship
Launched into Morecamb-bay, to *him* hath owed
Her strong knee-timbers, and the mast that bears
The loftiest of her pendants; He, from park
Or forest, fetched the enormous axle-tree
That whirls (how slow itself!) ten thousand spindles:
And the vast engine labouring in the mine,
Content with meaner prowess, must have lacked
The trunk and body of its marvellous strength,
If his undaunted enterprise had failed
Among the mountain coves.

Yon household fir,
A guardian planted to fence off the blast,
But towering high the roof above, as if
Its humble destination were forgot—
That sycamore, which annually holds
Within its shade, as in a stately tent
On all sides open to the fanning breeze,
A grave assemblage, seated while they shear
The fleece-encumbered flock—the *JOYFUL ELM*,
Around whose trunk the maidens dance in May—
And the *LORD'S OAK*—would plead their several
In vain, if he were master of their fate; [rights
His sentence to the axe would doom them all.
But, green in age and lusty as he is,
And promising to keep his hold on earth
Less, as might seem, in rivalry with men
Than with the forest's more enduring growth,
His own appointed hour will come at last;
And, like the haughty Spoilers of the world,
This keen Destroyer, in his turn, must fall.

Now from the living pass we once again:
From Age," the Priest continued, "turn your
thoughts;

From Age, that often unlamented drops,
 And mark that daisied hillock, three spans long !
 —Seven lusty Sons sate daily round the board
 Of Gold-rill side ; and, when the hope had ceased
 Of other progeny, a Daughter then
 Was given, the crowning bounty of the whole ;
 And so acknowledged with a tremulous joy
 Felt to the centre of that heavenly calm
 With which by nature every mother's soul
 Is stricken in the moment when her throes
 Are ended, and her ears have heard the cry
 Which tells her that a living child is born ;
 And she lies conscious, in a blissful rest,
 That the dread storm is weathered by them both.

The Father—him at this unlooked-for gift
 A bolder transport seizes. From the side
 Of his bright hearth, and from his open door,
 Day after day the gladness is diffused
 To all that come, almost to all that pass ;
 Invited, summoned, to partake the cheer
 Spread on the never-empty board, and drink
 Health and good wishes to his new-born girl,
 From cups replenished by his joyous hand.
 —Those seven fair brothers variously were moved
 Each by the thoughts best suited to his years :
 But most of all and with most thankful mind
 The hoary grandsire felt himself enriched ;
 A happiness that ebb'd not, but remained
 To fill the total measure of his soul !
 —From the low tenement, his own abode,
 Whither, as to a little private cell,
 He had withdrawn from bustle, care, and noise,
 To spend the sabbath of old age in peace,
 Once every day he duteously repaired
 To rock the cradle of the slumbering babe :
 For in that female infant's name he heard
 The silent name of his departed wife ;
 Heart-stirring music ! hourly heard that name ;
 Full blest he was, ' Another Margaret Green,'
 Oft did he say, ' was come to Gold-rill side.'

Oh ! pang unthought of, as the precious boon
 Itself had been unlooked-for ; oh ! dire stroke
 Of desolating anguish for them all !
 —Just as the Child could totter on the floor,
 And, by some friendly finger's help upstayed,
 Range round the garden walk, while she perchance
 Was catching at some novelty of spring,
 Ground-flower, or glossy insect from its cell
 Drawn by the sunshine—at that hopeful season
 The winds of March, smiting insidiously,
 Raised in the tender passage of the throat
 Viewless obstruction ; whence, all unforwarned,

The household lost their pride and soul's delight.
 —But time hath power to soften all regrets,
 And prayer and thought can bring to worst distress
 Due resignation. Therefore, though some tears
 Fail not to spring from either Parent's eye
 Oft as they hear of sorrow like their own,
 Yet this departed Little-one, too long
 The innocent troubler of their quiet, sleeps
 In what may now be called a peaceful bed.

On a bright day—so calm and bright, it seemed
 To us, with our sad spirits, heavenly-fair—
 These mountains echoed to an unknown sound ;
 A volley, thrice repeated o'er the Corse
 Let down into the hollow of that grave,
 Whose shelving sides are red with naked mould.
 Ye rains of April, duly wet this earth !
 Spare, burning sun of midsummer, these sods,
 That they may knit together, and therewith
 Our thoughts unite in kindred quietness !
 Nor so the Valley shall forget her loss.
 Dear Youth, by young and old alike beloved,
 To me as precious as my own !—Green herbs
 May creep (I wish that they would softly creep)
 Over thy last abode, and we may pass
 Reminded less imperiously of thee ;—
 The ridge itself may sink into the breast
 Of earth, the great abyss, and be no more ;
 Yet shall not thy remembrance leave our hearts,
 Thy image disappear !

The Mountain-ash
 No eye can overlook, when 'mid a grove
 Of yet unfaded trees she lifts her head
 Decked with autumnal berries, that outshine
 Spring's richest blossoms ; and ye may have marked,
 By a brook-side or solitary tarn,
 How she her station doth adorn : the pool
 Glows at her feet, and all the gloomy rocks
 Are brightened round her. In his native vale
 Such and so glorious did this Youth appear ;
 A sight that kindled pleasure in all hearts
 By his ingenuous beauty, by the gleam
 Of his fair eyes, by his capacious brow,
 By all the graces with which nature's hand
 Had lavishly arrayed him. As old bards
 Tell in their idle songs of wandering gods,
 Pan or Apollo, veiled in human form :
 Yet, like the sweet-breathed violet of the shade
 Discovered in their own despite to sense
 Of mortals (if such fables without blame
 May find chance-mention on this sacred ground)
 So, through a simple rustic garb's disguise,
 And through the impediment of rural cares,
 In him revealed a scholar's genius shone ;

And so, not wholly hidden from men's sight,
In him the spirit of a hero walked
Our unpretending valley.—How the quoit
Whizzed from the Stripling's arm! If touched by
him,

The inglorious foot-ball mounted to the pitch
Of the lark's flight,—or shaped a rainbow curve,
Aloft, in prospect of the shouting field!
The indefatigable fox had learned
To dread his perseverance in the chase.
With admiration would he lift his eyes
To the wide-ruling eagle, and his hand
Was loth to assault the majesty he loved:
Else had the strongest fastnesses proved weak
To guard the royal brood. The sailing glead,
The wheeling swallow, and the darting snipe.
The sportive sea-gull dancing with the waves,
And cautious water-fowl, from distant climes,
Fixed at their seat, the centre of the Mere,
Were subject to young Oswald's steady aim,
And lived by his forbearance.

From the coast
Of France a boastful Tyrant hurled his threats;
Our Country marked the preparation vast
Of hostile forces; and she called—with voice
That filled her plains, that reached her utmost
shores,

And in remotest vales was heard—to arms!
—Then, for the first time, here you might have seen
The shepherd's grey to martial scarlet changed,
That flashed uncouthly through the woods and fields.
Ten hardy Striplings, all in bright attire,
And graced with shining weapons, weekly marched,
From this lone valley, to a central spot
Where, in assemblage with the flower and choice
Of the surrounding district, they might learn
The rudiments of war; ten—hardy, strong,
And valiant; but young Oswald, like a chief
And yet a modest comrade, led them forth
From their shy solitude, to face the world,
With a gay confidence and seemly pride;
Measuring the soil beneath their happy feet
Like Youths released from labour, and yet bound
To most laborious service, though to them
A festival of unencumbered ease;
The inner spirit keeping holiday,
Like vernal ground to sabbath sunshine left.

Oft have I marked him, at some leisure hour,
Stretched on the grass, or seated in the shade,
Among his fellows, while an ample map
Before their eyes lay carefully outspread,
From which the gallant teacher would discourse,
Now pointing this way, and now that.—‘Here flows,

Thus would he say, ‘The Rhine, that famous
stream!

‘Eastward, the Danube toward this inland sea,
‘A mightier river, winds from realm to realm;
‘And, like a serpent, shows his glittering back
‘Bespotted—with innumerable isles:
‘Here reigns the Russian, there the Turk; observe
‘His capital city!’ Thence, along a tract
Of livelier interest to his hopes and fears,
His finger moved, distinguishing the spots
Where wide-spread conflict then most fiercely raged;
Nor left unstigmatized those fatal fields
On which the sons of mighty Germany
Were taught a base submission.—‘Here behold
‘A nobler race, the Switzers, and their land,
‘Vales deeper far than these of ours, huge woods,
‘And mountains white with everlasting snow!’
—And, surely, he, that spake with kindling brow,
Was a true patriot, hopeful as the best
Of that young peasantry, who, in our days,
Have fought and perished for Helvetia's rights—
Ah, not in vain!—or those who, in old time,
For work of happier issue, to the side
Of Tell came trooping from a thousand huts,
When he had risen alone! No braver Youth
Descended from Judean heights, to march
With righteous Joshua; nor appeared in arms
When grove was felled, and altar was cast down,
And Gideon blew the trumpet, soul-inflamed,
And strong in hatred of idolatry.”

The Pastor, even as if by these last words
Raised from his seat within the chosen shade,
Moved toward the grave;—instinctively his steps
We followed; and my voice with joy exclaimed:
“Power to the Oppressors of the world is given,
A might of which they dream not. Oh! the curse,
To be the awakener of divinest thoughts,
Father and founder of exalted deeds;
And, to whole nations bound in servile straits,
The liberal donor of capacities
More than heroic! this to be, nor yet
Have sense of one connatural wish, nor yet
Deserve the least return of human thanks;
Winning no recompense but deadly hate
With pity mixed, astonishment with scorn!”

When this involuntary strain had ceased,
The Pastor said: “So Providence is served;
The forked weapon of the skies can send
Illumination into deep, dark holds,
Which the mild sunbeam hath not power to pierce.
Ye Thrones that have defied remorse, and cast
Pity away, soon shall ye quake with fear!”

For, not unconscious of the mighty debt
Which to outrageous wrong the sufferer owes,
Europe, through all her habitable bounds,
Is thirsting for *their* overthrow, who yet
Survive, as pagan temples stood of yore,
By horror of their impious rites, preserved ;
Are still permitted to extend their pride,
Like cedars on the top of Lebanon
Darkening the sun.

But less impatient thoughts,
And love 'all hoping and expecting all,'
This hallowed grave demands, where rests in peace
A humble champion of the better cause ;
A Peasant-youth, so call him, for he asked
No higher name ; in whom our country showed,
As in a favourite son, most beautiful.
In spite of vice, and misery, and disease,
Spread with the spreading of her wealthy arts,
England, the ancient and the free, appeared
In him to stand before my swimming eyes,
Unconquerably virtuous and secure.
—No more of this, lest I offend his dust :
Short was his life, and a brief tale remains.

One day—a summer's day of annual pomp
And solemn chase—from morn to sultry noon
His steps had followed, fleetest of the fleet,
The red-deer driven along its native heights
With cry of hound and horn ; and, from that toil
Returned with sinews weakened and relaxed,
This generous Youth, too negligent of self,
Plunged—'mid a gay and busy throng convened
To wash the fleeces of his Father's flock—
Into the chilling flood. Convulsions dire [space
Seized him, that self-same night ; and through the
Of twelve ensuing days his frame was wrenched,
Till nature rested from her work in death.
To him, thus snatched away, his comrades paid
A soldier's honours. At his funeral hour
Bright was the sun, the sky a cloudless blue—
A golden lustre slept upon the hills ;
And if by chance a stranger, wandering there,
From some commanding eminence had looked
Down on this spot, well pleased would he have seen
A glittering spectacle ; but every face
Was pallid : seldom hath that eye been moist
With tears, that wept not then ; nor were the few,
Who from their dwellings came not forth to join
In this sad service, less disturbed than we.
They started at the tributary peal
Of instantaneous thunder, which announced,
Through the still air, the closing of the Grave ;
And distant mountains echoed with a sound
Of lamentation, never heard before ! ”

The Pastor ceased.—My venerable Friend
Victoriously upraised his clear bright eye ;
And, when that eulogy was ended, stood
Enrapt, as if his inward sense perceived
The prolongation of some still response,
Sent by the ancient Soul of this wide land,
The Spirit of its mountains and its seas,
Its cities, temples, fields, its awful power,
Its rights and virtues—by that Deity
Descending, and supporting his pure heart
With patriotic confidence and joy.
And, at the last of those memorial words,
The pining Solitary turned aside ;
Whether through manly instinct to conceal
Tender emotions spreading from the heart
To his worn cheek ; or with uneasy shame
For those cold humours of habitual spleen
That, fondly seeking in dispraise of man
Solace and self-excuse, had sometimes urged
To self-abuse a not ineloquent tongue.
—Right toward the sacred Edifice his steps
Had been directed ; and we saw him now
Intent upon a monumental stone,
Whose uncouth form was grafted on the wall,
Or rather seemed to have grown into the side
Of the rude pile ; as oft-times trunks of trees,
Where nature works in wild and craggy spots,
Are seen incorporate with the living rock—
To endure for aye. The Vicar, taking note
Of his employment, with a courteous smile
Exclaimed—

“The sagest Antiquarian's eye
That task would foil ;” then, letting fall his voice
While he advanced, thus spake : “ Tradition tells
That, in Eliza's golden days, a Knight
Came on a war-horse sumptuously attired,
And fixed his home in this sequestered vale.
'Tis left untold if here he first drew breath,
Or as a stranger reached this deep recess,
Unknowing and unknown. A pleasing thought
I sometimes entertain, that haply bound
To Scotland's court in service of his Queen,
Or sent on mission to some northern Chief
Of England's realm, this vale he might have seen
With transient observation ; and thence caught
An image fair, which, brightening in his soul
When joy of war and pride of chivalry
Languished beneath accumulated years,
Had power to draw him from the world, resolved
To make that paradise his chosen home
To which his peaceful fancy oft had turned.

Vague thoughts are these ; but, if belief may rest
Upon unwritten story fondly traced

From sire to son, in this obscure retreat
 The Knight arrived, with spear and shield, and borne
 Upon a Charger gorgeously bedecked
 With broidered housings. And the lofty Steed—
 His sole companion, and his faithful friend,
 Whom he, in gratitude, let loose to range
 In fertile pastures—was beheld with eyes
 Of admiration and delightful awe,
 By those untravell'd Dalesmen. With less pride,
 Yet free from touch of envious discontent,
 They saw a mansion at his bidding rise,
 Like a bright star, amid the lowly band
 Of their rude homesteads. Here the Warrior dwelt;
 And, in that mansion, children of his own,
 Or kindred, gathered round him. As a tree
 That falls and disappears, the house is gone;
 And, through improvidence or want of love
 For ancient worth and honourable things,
 The spear and shield are vanished, which the
 Knight

Hung in his rustic hall. One ivied arch
 Myself have seen, a gateway, last remains
 Of that foundation in domestic care
 Raised by his hands. And now no trace is left
 Of the mild-hearted Champion, save this stone,
 Faithless memorial! and his family name
 Borne by yon clustering cottages, that sprang
 From out the ruins of his stately lodge:
 These, and the name and title at full length,—
Sir Alfred Erthing, with appropriate words
 Accompanied, still extant, in a wreath
 Or posy, girding round the several fronts
 Of three clear-sounding and harmonious bells,
 That in the steeple hang, his pious gift.”

“So fails, so languishes, grows dim, and dies,”
 The grey-haired Wanderer pensively exclaimed,
 “All that this world is proud of. From their spheres
 The stars of human glory are cast down;
 Perish the roses and the flowers of kings,
 Princes, and emperors, and the crowns and palms
 Of all the mighty, withered and consumed!
 Nor is power given to lowliest innocence
 Long to protect her own. The man himself
 Departs; and soon is spent the line of those
 Who, in the bodily image, in the mind,
 In heart or soul, in station or pursuit,
 Did most resemble him. Degrees and ranks,
 Fraternities and orders—heaping high
 New wealth upon the burthen of the old,
 And placing trust in privilege confirmed
 And re-confirmed—are scoffed at with a smile
 Of greedy foretaste, from the secret stand
 Of Desolation, aimed: to slow decline

These yield, and these to sudden overthrow:
 Their virtue, service, happiness, and state
 Expire; and nature's pleasant robe of green,
 Humanity's appointed shroud, enwraps
 Their monuments and their memory. The vast
 Frame

Of social nature changes evermore
 Her organs and her members with decay
 Restless, and restless generation, powers
 And functions dying and produced at need,—
 And by this law the mighty whole subsists:
 With an ascent and progress in the main;
 Yet, oh! how disproportioned to the hopes
 And expectations of self-flattering minds!

The courteous Knight, whose bones are here
 interred,
 Lived in an age conspicuous as our own
 For strife and ferment in the minds of men;
 Whence alteration in the forms of things,
 Various and vast. A memorable age!
 Which did to him assign a pensive lot—
 To linger 'mid the last of those bright clouds
 That, on the steady breeze of honour, sailed
 In long procession calm and beautiful.
 He who had seen his own bright order fade,
 And its devotion gradually decline,
 (While war, relinquishing the lance and shield,
 Her temper changed, and bowed to other laws)
 Had also witnessed, in his morn of life,
 That violent commotion, which o'erthrew,
 In town and city and sequestered glen,
 Altar, and cross, and church of solemn roof,
 And old religious house—pile after pile;
 And shook their tenants out into the fields,
 Like wild beasts without home! Their hour was
 come;

But why no softening thought of gratitude,
 No just remembrance, scruple, or wise doubt?
 Benevolence is mild; nor borrows help,
 Save at worst need, from bold impetuous force,
 Fittest allied to anger and revenge.
 But Human-kind rejoices in the might
 Of mutability; and airy hopes,
 Dancing around her, hinder and disturb
 Those meditations of the soul that feed
 The retrospective virtues. Festive songs
 Break from the maddened nations at the sight
 Of sudden overthrow; and cold neglect
 Is the sure consequence of slow decay.

Even,” said the Wanderer, “as that courteous
 Knight,
 Bound by his vow to labour for redress

Of all who suffer wrong, and to enact
By sword and lance the law of gentleness,
(If I may venture of myself to speak,
Trusting that not incongruously I blend
Low things with lofty) I too shall be doomed
To outlive the kindly use and fair esteem
Of the poor calling which my youth embraced
With no unworthy prospect. But enough;

—Thoughts crowd upon me—and 'twere seemlier
now

To stop, and yield our gracious Teacher thanks
For the pathetic records which his voice
Hath here delivered; words of heartfelt truth,
Tending to patience when affliction strikes;
To hope and love; to confident repose
In God; and reverence for the dust of Man."

BOOK EIGHTH.

THE PARSONAGE.

ARGUMENT.

Pastor's apology and apprehensions that he might have detained his Auditors too long, with the Pastor's invitation to his house—Solitary disinclined to comply—rallies the Wanderer—and playfully draws a comparison between his itinerant profession and that of the Knight-errant—which leads to Wanderer's giving an account of changes in the Country from the manufacturing spirit—Favourable effects—The other side of the picture, and chiefly as it has affected the humbler classes—Wanderer asserts the hollowness of all national grandeur if unsupported by moral worth—Physical science unable to support itself—Lamentations over an excess of manufacturing industry among the humbler Classes of Society.—Picture of a Child employed in a Cotton-mill—Ignorance and degradation of Children among the agricultural Population reviewed—Conversation broken off by a renewed Invitation from the Pastor—Path leading to his House—Its appearance described—His Daughter—His Wife—His Son (a Boy) enters with his Companion—Their happy appearance—The Wanderer how affected by the sight of them.

THE pensive Sceptic of the lonely vale
To those acknowledgments subscribed his own,
With a sedate compliance, which the Priest
Failed not to notice, inly pleased, and said:—
"If ye, by whom invited I began
These narratives of calm and humble life,
Be satisfied, 'tis well,—the end is gained;
And, in return for sympathy bestowed
And patient listening, thanks accept from me.
—Life, death, eternity! momentous themes
Are they—and might demand a seraph's tongue,
Were they not equal to their own support;
And therefore no incompetence of mine
Could do them wrong. The universal forms
Of human nature, in a spot like this,
Present themselves at once to all men's view:
Ye wished for act and circumstance, that make

The individual known and understood;
And such as my best judgment could select
From what the place afforded, have been given;
Though apprehensions crossed me that my zeal
To his might well be likened, who unlocks
A cabinet stored with gems and pictures—draws
His treasures forth, soliciting regard
To this, and this, as worthier than the last,
Till the spectator, who awhile was pleased
More than the exhibitor himself, becomes
Weary and faint, and longs to be released.
—But let us hence! my dwelling is in sight,
And there—"

At this the Solitary shrunk
With backward will; but, wanting not address
That inward motion to disguise, he said
To his Compatriot, smiling as he spake;
—"The peaceable remains of this good Knight
Would be disturbed, I fear, with wrathful scorn,
If consciousness could reach him where he lies
That one, albeit of these degenerate times,
Deploring changes past, or dreading change
Foreseen, had dared to couple, even in thought,
The fine vocation of the sword and lance
With the gross aims and body-bending toil
Of a poor brotherhood who walk the earth
Pitied, and, where they are not known, despised.

Yet, by the good Knight's leave, the two estates
Are graced with some resemblance. Errant those,
Exiles and wanderers—and the like are these;
Who, with their burthen, traverse hill and dale,
Carrying relief for nature's simple wants.
—What though no higher recompense be sought
Than honest maintenance, by irksome toil
Full oft procured, yet may they claim respect,
Among the intelligent, for what this course
Enables them to be and to perform.

Their tardy steps give leisure to observe,
 While solitude permits the mind to feel ;
 Instructs, and prompts her to supply defects
 By the division of her inward self
 For grateful converse : and to these poor men
 Nature (I but repeat your favourite boast)
 Is bountiful—go wheresoe'er they may ;
 Kind nature's various wealth is all their own.
 Versed in the characters of men ; and bound,
 By ties of daily interest, to maintain
 Conciliatory manners and smooth speech ;
 Such have been, and still are in their degree,
 Examples efficacious to refine
 Rude intercourse ; apt agents to expel,
 By importation of unlooked-for arts,
 Barbarian torpor, and blind prejudice ;
 Raising, through just gradation, savage life
 To rustic, and the rustic to urbane.
 —Within their moving magazines is lodged
 Power that comes forth to quicken and exalt
 Affections seated in the mother's breast,
 And in the lover's fancy ; and to feed
 The sober sympathies of long-tried friends.
 —By these Itinerants, as experienced men,
 Counsel is given ; contention they appease
 With gentle language ; in remotest wilds,
 Tears wipe away, and pleasant tidings bring ;
 Could the proud quest of chivalry do more ?"

"Happy," rejoined the Wanderer, "they who gain
 A panegyric from your generous tongue !
 But, if to these Wayfarers once pertained
 Aught of romantic interest, it is gone.
 Their purer service, in this realm at least,
 Is past for ever.—An inventive Age
 Has wrought, if not with speed of magic, yet
 To most strange issues. I have lived to mark
 A new and unforeseen creation rise
 From out the labours of a peaceful Land
 Wielding her potent enginery to frame
 And to produce, with appetite as keen
 As that of war, which rests not night or day,
 Industrious to destroy ! With fruitless pains
 Might one like me *now* visit many a tract
 Which, in his youth, he trod, and trod again,
 A lone pedestrian with a scanty freight,
 Wished-for, or welcome, wheresoe'er he came—
 Among the tenantry of thorpe and vill ;
 Or straggling burgh, of ancient charter proud,
 And dignified by battlements and towers
 Of some stern castle, mouldering on the brow
 Of a green hill or bank of rugged stream.
 The foot-path faintly marked, the horse-track wild,
 And formidable length of plashy lane,

(Prized avenues ere others had been shaped
 Or easier links connecting place with place)
 Have vanished—swallowed up by stately roads
 Easy and bold, that penetrate the gloom
 Of Britain's farthest glens. The Earth has lent
 Her waters, Air her breezes ; and the sail
 Of traffic glides with ceaseless intercourse,
 Glistening along the low and woody dale ;
 Or, in its progress, on the lofty side,
 Of some bare hill, with wonder kenned from far.

Meanwhile, at social Industry's command,
 How quick, how vast an increase ! From the germ
 Of some poor hamlet, rapidly produced
 Here a huge town, continuous and compact,
 Hiding the face of earth for leagues—and there,
 Where not a habitation stood before,
 Abodes of men irregularly massed
 Like trees in forests,—spread through spacious
 tracts,
 O'er which the smoke of unremitting fires
 Hangs permanent, and plentiful as wreaths
 Of vapour glittering in the morning sun.
 And, wheresoe'er the traveller turns his steps,
 He sees the barren wilderness erased,
 Or disappearing ; triumph that proclaims
 How much the mild Directress of the plough
 Owes to alliance with these new-born arts !
 —Hence is the wide sea peopled,—hence the shores
 Of Britain are resorted to by ships
 Freightened from every climate of the world
 With the world's choicest produce. Hence that
 sum
 Of keels that rest within her crowded ports,
 Or ride at anchor in her sounds and bays ;
 That animating spectacle of sails
 That, through her inland regions, to and fro
 Pass with the respirations of the tide,
 Perpetual, multitudinous ! Finally,
 Hence a dread arm of floating power, a voice
 Of thunder daunting those who would approach
 With hostile purposes the blessed Isle,
 Truth's consecrated residence, the seat
 Impregnable of Liberty and Peace.

And yet, O happy Pastor of a flock
 Faithfully watched, and, by that loving care
 And Heaven's good providence, preserved from
 taint !
 With you I grieve, when on the darker side
 Of this great change I look ; and there behold
 Such outrage done to nature as compels
 The indignant power to justify herself ;
 Yea, to avenge her violated rights,

For England's bane.—When soothing darkness
spreads

O'er hill and vale," the Wanderer thus expressed
His recollections, "and the punctual stars,
While all things else are gathering to their homes,
Advance, and in the firmament of heaven
Glitter—but undisturbing, undisturbed ;
As if their silent company were charged
With peaceful admonitions for the heart
Of all-beholding Man, earth's thoughtful lord ;
Then, in full many a region, once like this
The assured domain of calm simplicity
And pensive quiet, an unnatural light
Prepared for never-resting Labour's eyes
Breaks from a many-windowed fabric huge ;
And at the appointed hour a bell is heard,
Of harsher import than the curfew-knoll
That spake the Norman Conqueror's stern behest—
A local summons to unceasing toil !
Disgorge are now the ministers of day ;
And, as they issue from the illumined pile,
A fresh band meets them, at the crowded door—
And in the courts—and where the rumbling stream,
That turns the multitude of dizzy wheels,
Glares, like a troubled spirit, in its bed
Among the rocks below. Men, maidens, youths,
Mother and little children, boys and girls,
Enter, and each the wonted task resumes
Within this temple, where is offered up
To Gain, the master idol of the realm,
Perpetual sacrifice. Even thus of old
Our ancestors, within the still domain
Of vast cathedral or conventual church,
Their vigils kept ; where tapers day and night
On the dim altar burned continually,
In token that the House was evermore
Watching to God. Religious men were they ;
Nor would their reason, tutored to aspire
Above this transitory world, allow
That there should pass a moment of the year,
When in their land the Almighty's service ceased.

Triumph who will in these profaner rites
Which we, a generation self-extolled,
As zealously perform ! I cannot share
His proud complacency :—yet do I exult,
Casting reserve away, exult to see
An intellectual mastery exercised
O'er the blind elements ; a purpose given,
A perseverance fed ; almost a soul
Imparted—to brute matter. I rejoice,
Measuring the force of those gigantic powers
That, by the thinking mind, have been compelled
To serve the will of feeble-bodied Man.

For with the sense of admiration blends
The animating hope that time may come
When, strengthened, yet not dazzled, by the might
Of this dominion over nature gained,
Men of all lands shall exercise the same
In due proportion to their country's need ;
Learning, though late, that all true glory rests,
All praise, all safety, and all happiness,
Upon the moral law. Egyptian Thebes,
Tyre, by the margin of the sounding waves,
Palmyra, central in the desert, fell ;
And the Arts died by which they had been raised.
—Call Archimedes from his buried tomb
Upon the grave of vanished Syracuse,
And feelingly the Sage shall make report
How insecure, how baseless in itself,
Is the Philosophy whose sway depends
On mere material instruments ;—how weak
Those arts, and high inventions, if unpropped
By virtue.—He, sighing with pensive grief,
Amid his calm abstractions, would admit
That not the slender privilege is theirs
To save themselves from blank forgetfulness !"

When from the Wanderer's lips these words had
fallen,
I said, "And, did in truth those vaunted Arts
Possess such privilege, how could we escape
Sadness and keen regret, we who revere,
And would preserve as things above all price,
The old domestic morals of the land,
Her simple manners, and the stable worth
That dignified and cheered a low estate ?
Oh ! where is now the character of peace,
Sobriety, and order, and chaste love,
And honest dealing, and untainted speech,
And pure good-will, and hospitable cheer ;
That made the very thought of country-life
A thought of refuge, for a mind detained
Reluctantly amid the bustling crowd ?
Where now the beauty of the sabbath kept
With conscientious reverence, as a day
By the almighty Lawgiver pronounced
Holy and blest ? and where the winning grace
Of all the lighter ornaments attached
To time and season, as the year rolled round ?"

"Fled!" was the Wanderer's passionate response,
"Fled utterly ! or only to be traced
In a few fortunate retreats like this ;
Which I behold with trembling, when I think
What lamentable change, a year—a month—
May bring ; that brook converting as it runs
Into an instrument of deadly bane

For those, who, yet untempted to forsake
 The simple occupations of their sires,
 Drink the pure water of its innocent stream
 With lip almost as pure.—Domestic bliss
 (Or call it comfort, by a humbler name,)

How art thou blighted for the poor Man's heart!
 Lo! in such neighbourhood, from morn to eve,
 The habitations empty! or perchance
 The Mother left alone,—no helping hand
 To rock the cradle of her peevish babe;
 No daughters round her, busy at the wheel,
 Or in dispatch of each day's little growth
 Of household occupation; no nice arts
 Of needle-work; no bustle at the fire,
 Where once the dinner was prepared with pride;
 Nothing to speed the day, or cheer the mind;
 Nothing to praise, to teach, or to command!

The Father, if perchance he still retain
 His old employments, goes to field or wood,
 No longer led or followed by the Sons;
 Idlers perchance they were,—but in *his* sight;
 Breathing fresh air, and treading the green earth;
 'Till their short holiday of childhood ceased,
 Ne'er to return! That birthright now is lost.
 Economists will tell you that the State
 Thrives by the forfeiture—unfeeling thought,
 And false as monstrous! Can the mother thrive
 By the destruction of her innocent sons
 In whom a premature necessity
 Blocks out the forms of nature, preconsumes
 The reason, famishes the heart, shuts up
 The infant Being in itself, and makes
 Its very spring a season of decay!
 The lot is wretched, the condition sad,
 Whether a pining discontent survive,
 And thirst for change; or habit hath subdued
 The soul deprest, dejected—even to love
 Of her close tasks, and long captivity.

Oh, banish far such wisdom as condemns
 A native Briton to these inward chains,
 Fixed in his soul, so early and so deep;
 Without his own consent, or knowledge, fixed!
 He is a slave to whom release comes not,
 And cannot come. The boy, where'er he turns,
 Is still a prisoner; when the wind is up
 Among the clouds, and roars through the ancient
 woods;

Or when the sun is shining in the east,
 Quiet and calm. Behold him—in the school
 Of his attainments? no; but with the air
 Fanning his temples under heaven's blue arch.
 His raiment, whitened o'er with cotton-flakes

Or locks of wool, announces whence he comes.
 Creeping his gait and cowering, his lip pale,
 His respiration quick and audible;
 And scarcely could you fancy that a gleam
 Could break from out those languid eyes, or a blush
 Mantle upon his cheek. Is this the form,
 Is that the countenance, and such the port,
 Of no mean Being? One who should be clothed
 With dignity befitting his proud hope;
 Who, in his very childhood, should appear
 Sublime from present purity and joy!
 The limbs increase; but liberty of mind
 Is gone for ever; and this organic frame,
 So joyful in its motions, is become
 Dull, to the joy of her own motions dead;
 And even the touch, so exquisitely poured
 Through the whole body, with a languid will
 Performs its functions; rarely competent
 To impress a vivid feeling on the mind
 Of what there is delightful in the breeze,
 The gentle visitations of the sun,
 Or lapse of liquid element—by hand,
 Or foot, or lip, in summer's warmth—perceived.
 —Can hope look forward to a manhood raised
 On such foundations?"

"Hope is none for him!"

The pale Recluse indignantly exclaimed,
 "And tens of thousands suffer wrong as deep.
 Yet be it asked, in justice to our age,
 If there were not, before those arts appeared,
 These structures rose, commingling old and young,
 And unripe sex with sex, for mutual taint;
 If there were not, *then*, in our far-famed Isle,
 Multitudes, who from infancy had breathed
 Air unimprisoned, and had lived at large;
 Yet walked beneath the sun, in human shape,
 As abject, as degraded? At this day,
 Who shall enumerate the crazy huts
 And tottering hovels, whence do issue forth
 A ragged Offspring, with their upright hair
 Crowned like the image of fantastic Fear;
 Or wearing, (shall we say?) in that white growth
 An ill-adjusted turban, for defence
 Or fierceness, wreathed around their sun-burnt
 brows,

By savage Nature! Shrivelled are their lips;
 Naked, and coloured like the soil, the feet
 On which they stand; as if thereby they drew
 Some nourishment, as trees do by their roots,
 From earth, the common mother of us all.
 Figure and mien, complexion and attire,
 Are leagued to strike dismay; but outstretched
 hand
 And whining voice denote them supplicants

For the least boon that pity can bestow.
Such on the breast of darksome heaths are found ;
And with their parents occupy the skirts
Of furze-clad commons ; such are born and reared
At the mine's mouth under impending rocks ;
Or dwell in chambers of some natural cave ;
Or where their ancestors erected huts,
For the convenience of unlawful gain,
In forest purlieus ; and the like are bred,
All England through, where nooks and slips of
ground

Purloined, in times less jealous than our own,
From the green margin of the public way,
A residence afford them, 'mid the bloom
And gaiety of cultivated fields.
Such (we will hope the lowest in the scale)
Do I remember oft-times to have seen
'Mid Buxton's dreary heights. In earnest watch,
Till the swift vehicle approach, they stand ;
Then, following closely with the cloud of dust,
An uncouth feat exhibit, and are gone
Heels over head, like tumblers on a stage.
—Up from the ground they snatch the copper coin,
And, on the freight of merry passengers
Fixing a steady eye, maintain their speed ;
And spin—and pant—and overhead again,
Wild pursuivants ! until their breath is lost,
Or bounty tires—and every face, that smiled
Encouragement, hath ceased to look that way.
—But, like the vagrants of the gipsy tribe,
These, bred to little pleasure in themselves,
Are profitless to others.

Turn we then
To Britons born and bred within the pale
Of civil polity, and early trained
To earn, by wholesome labour in the field,
The bread they eat. A sample should I give
Of what this stock hath long produced to enrich
The tender age of life, ye would exclaim,
'Is this the whistling plough-boy whose shrill notes
Impart new gladness to the morning air !'
Forgive me if I venture to suspect
That many, sweet to hear of in soft verse,
Are of no finer frame. Stiff are his joints ;
Beneath a cumbrous frock, that to the knees
Invests the thriving churl, his legs appear,
Fellows to those that lustily upheld
The wooden stools for everlasting use,
Whereon our fathers sate. And mark his brow !
Under whose shaggy canopy are set
Two eyes—not dim, but of a healthy stare—
Wide, sluggish, blank, and ignorant, and strange—
Proclaiming boldly that they never drew
A look or motion of intelligence

From infant-conning of the Christ-cross-row,
Or puzzling through a primer, line by line,
Till perfect mastery crown the pains at last.
—What kindly warmth from touch of fostering
hand,

What penetrating power of sun or breeze,
Shall e'er dissolve the crust wherein his soul
Sleeps, like a caterpillar sheathed in ice !
This torpor is no pitiable work
Of modern ingenuity ; no town
Nor crowded city can be taxed with aught
Of sottish vice or desperate breach of law,
To which (and who can tell where or how soon ?)
He may be roused. This Boy the fields produce :
His spade and hoe, mattock and glittering scythe,
The carter's whip that on his shoulder rests
In air high-towering with a boorish pomp,
The sceptre of his sway ; his country's name,
Her equal rights, her churches and her schools—
What have they done for him ? And, let me ask,
For tens of thousands uninformed as he ?
In brief, what liberty of *mind* is here ? ”

This ardent sally pleased the mild good Man,
To whom the appeal couched in its closing words
Was pointedly addressed ; and to the thoughts
That, in assent or opposition, rose
Within his mind, he seemed prepared to give
Prompt utterance ; but the Vicar interposed
With invitation urgently renewed.
—We followed, taking as he led, a path
Along a hedge of hollies dark and tall,
Whose flexile boughs low bending with a weight
Of leafy spray, concealed the stems and roots
That gave them nourishment. When frosty winds
Howl from the north, what kindly warmth, me-
thought,

Is here—how grateful this impervious screen !
—Not shaped by simple wearing of the foot
On rural business passing to and fro
Was the commodious walk : a careful hand
Had marked the line, and strewn its surface o'er
With pure cerulean gravel, from the heights
Fetched by a neighbouring brook.—Across the vale
The stately fence accompanied our steps ;
And thus the pathway, by perennial green
Guarded and graced, seemed fashioned to unite,
As by a beautiful yet solemn chain,
The Pastor's mansion with the house of prayer.

Like image of solemnity, conjoined
With feminine allurements soft and fair,
The mansion's self displayed ;—a reverend pile
With bold projections and recesses deep ;

Shadowy, yet gay and lightsome as it stood
 Fronting the noontide sun. We paused to admire
 The pillared porch, elaborately embossed ;
 The low wide windows with their mullions old ;
 The cornice, richly fretted, of grey stone ;
 And that smooth slope from which the dwelling rose,
 By beds and banks Arcadian of gay flowers
 And flowering shrubs, protected and adorned :
 Profusion bright ! and every flower assuming
 A more than natural vividness of hue,
 From unaffected contrast with the gloom
 Of sober cypress, and the darker foil
 Of yew, in which survived some traces, here
 Not unbecoming, of grotesque device
 And uncouth fancy. From behind the roof
 Rose the slim ash and massy sycamore,
 Blending their diverse foliage with the green
 Of ivy, flourishing and thick, that clasped
 The huge round chimneys, harbour of delight
 For wren and redbreast,—where they sit and sing
 Their slender ditties when the trees are bare.
 Nor must I leave untouched (the picture else
 Were incomplete) a relique of old times
 Happily spared, a little Gothic niche
 Of nicest workmanship ; that once had held
 The sculptured image of some patron-saint,
 Or of the blessed Virgin, looking down
 On all who entered those religious doors.

But lo ! where from the rocky garden-mount
 Crowned by its antique summer-house—descends,
 Light as the silver fawn, a radiant Girl ;
 For she hath recognised her honoured friend,
 The Wanderer ever welcome ! A prompt kiss
 The gladsome Child bestows at his request ;
 And, up the flowery lawn as we advance,
 Hangs on the old Man with a happy look,
 And with a pretty restless hand of love.
 —We enter—by the Lady of the place
 Cordially greeted. Graceful was her port :
 A lofty stature undepressed by time,
 Whose visitation had not wholly spared
 The finer lineaments of form and face ;
 To that complexion brought which prudence trusts in
 And wisdom loves.—But when a stately ship
 Sails in smooth weather by the placid coast
 On homeward voyage, what—if wind and wave,
 And hardship undergone in various climes,
 Have caused her to abate the virgin pride,
 And that full trim of inexperienced hope
 With which she left her haven—not for this,
 Should the sun strike her, and the impartial breeze
 Play on her streamers, fails she to assume
 Brightness and touching beauty of her own,

That charm all eyes. So bright, so fair, appeared
 This goodly Matron, shining in the beams
 Of unexpected pleasure.—Soon the board
 Was spread, and we partook a plain repast.

Here, resting in cool shelter, we beguiled
 The mid-day hours with desultory talk ;
 From trivial themes to general argument
 Passing, as accident or fancy led,
 Or courtesy prescribed. While question rose
 And answer flowed, the fetters of reserve
 Dropping from every mind, the Solitary
 Resumed the manners of his happier days ;
 And in the various conversation bore
 A willing, nay, at times, a forward part ;
 Yet with the grace of one who in the world
 Had learned the art of pleasing, and had now
 Occasion given him to display his skill,
 Upon the steadfast 'vantage-ground of truth.
 He gazed, with admiration unsuppressed,
 Upon the landscape of the sun-bright vale,
 Seen, from the shady room in which we sate,
 In softened perspective ; and more than once
 Praised the consummate harmony serene
 Of gravity and elegance, diffused
 Around the mansion and its whole domain ;
 Not, doubtless, without help of female taste
 And female care.—“ A blessed lot is yours ! ”
 The words escaped his lip, with a tender sigh
 Breathed over them : but suddenly the door
 Flew open, and a pair of lusty Boys
 Appeared, confusion checking their delight.
 —Not brothers they in feature or attire,
 But fond companions, so I guessed, in field,
 And by the river's margin—whence they come,
 Keen anglers with unusual spoil elated.
 One bears a willow-pannier on his back,
 The boy of plainer garb, whose blush survives
 More deeply tinged. Twin might the other be
 To that fair girl who from the garden-mount
 Bounded :—triumphant entry this for him !
 Between his hands he holds a smooth blue stone,
 On whose capacious surface see outspread
 Large store of gleaming crimson-spotted trouts ;
 Ranged side by side, and lessening by degrees
 Up to the dwarf that tops the pinnacle.
 Upon the board he lays the sky-blue stone
 With its rich freight ; their number he proclaims ;
 Tells from what pool the noblest had been dragged ;
 And where the very monarch of the brook,
 After long struggle, had escaped at last—
 Stealing alternately at them and us
 (As doth his comrade too) a look of pride :
 And, verily, the silent creatures made

A splendid sight, together thus exposed ;
Dead—but not sullied or deformed by death,
That seemed to pity what he could not spare.

But O, the animation in the mien
Of those two boys ! yea in the very words
With which the young narrator was inspired,
When, as our questions led, he told at large
Of that day's prowess ! Him might I compare,
His looks, tones, gestures, eager eloquence,
To a bold brook that splits for better speed,
And at the self-same moment, works its way
Through many channels, ever and anon
Parted and re-united : his compeer
To the still lake, whose stillness is to sight
As beautiful—as grateful to the mind.
—But to what object shall the lovely Girl
Be likened ? She whose countenance and air

Unite the graceful qualities of both,
Even as she shares the pride and joy of both.

My grey-haired Friend was moved ; his vivid eye
Glistened with tenderness ; his mind, I knew,
Was full ; and had, I doubted not, returned,
Upon this impulse, to the theme—erewhile
Abruptly broken off. The ruddy boys
Withdrew, on summons to their well-earned meal ;
And He—to whom all tongues resigned their rights
With willingness, to whom the general ear
Listened with readier patience than to strain
Of music, lute or harp, a long delight
That ceased not when his voice had ceased—as One
Who from truth's central point serenely views
The compass of his argument—began
Mildly, and with a clear and steady tone.

BOOK NINTH.

DISCOURSE OF THE WANDERER, AND AN EVENING VISIT TO THE LAKE.

ARGUMENT.

Wanderer asserts that an active principle pervades the Universe, its noblest seat the human soul—How lively this principle is in Childhood—Hence the delight in old Age of looking back upon Childhood—The dignity, powers, and privileges of Age asserted—These not to be looked for generally but under a just government—Right of a human Creature to be exempt from being considered as a mere Instrument—The condition of multitudes deplored—Former conversation recurred to, and the Wanderer's opinions set in a clearer light—Truth placed within reach of the humblest—Equality—Happy state of the two Boys again adverted to—Earnest wish expressed for a System of National Education established universally by Government—Glorious effects of this foretold—Walk to the Lake—Grand spectacle from the side of a hill—Address of Priest to the Supreme Being—in the course of which he contrasts with ancient Barbarism the present appearance of the scene before him—The change ascribed to Christianity—Apostrophe to his flock, living and dead—Gratitude to the Almighty—Return over the Lake—Parting with the Solitary—Under what circumstances.

"To every Form of being is assigned,"
Thus calmly spake the venerable Sage,
"An active Principle :—how'er removed
From sense and observation, it subsists
In all things, in all natures ; in the stars

Of azure heaven, the unenduring clouds,
In flower and tree, in every pebbly stone
That paves the brooks, the stationary rocks,
The moving waters, and the invisible air.
Whate'er exists hath properties that spread
Beyond itself, communicating good,
A simple blessing, or with evil mixed ;
Spirit that knows no insulated spot,
No chasm, no solitude ; from link to link
It circulates, the Soul of all the worlds.
This is the freedom of the universe ;
Unfolded still the more, more visible,
The more we know ; and yet is revered least,
And least respected in the human Mind,
Its most apparent home. The food of hope
Is meditated action ; robbed of this
Her sole support, she languishes and dies.
We perish also ; for we live by hope
And by desire ; we see by the glad light
And breathe the sweet air of futurity ;
And so we live, or else we have no life.
To-morrow—nay perchance this very hour
(For every moment hath its own to-morrow !)
Those blooming Boys, whose hearts are almost sick
With present triumph, will be sure to find
A field before them freshened with the dew
Of other expectations ;—in which course
Their happy year spins round. The youth obeys

A like glad impulse ; and so moves the man
 'Mid all his apprehensions, cares, and fears,—
 Or so he ought to move. Ah ! why in age
 Do we revert so fondly to the walks
 Of childhood—but that there the Soul discerns
 The dear memorial footsteps unimpaired
 Of her own native vigour ; thence can hear
 Reverberations ; and a choral song,
 Commingling with the incense that ascends,
 Undaunted, toward the imperishable heavens,
 From her own lonely altar ?

Do not think

That good and wise ever will be allowed,
 Though strength decay, to breathe in such estate
 As shall divide them wholly from the stir
 Of hopeful nature. Rightly is it said
 That Man descends into the VALE of years ;
 Yet have I thought that we might also speak,
 And not presumptuously, I trust, of Age,
 As of a final EMINENCE ; though bare
 In aspect and forbidding, yet a point
 On which 'tis not impossible to sit
 In awful sovereignty ; a place of power,
 A throne, that may be likened unto his,
 Who, in some placid day of summer, looks
 Down from a mountain-top,—say one of those
 High peaks, that bound the vale where now we
 are.

Faint, and diminished to the gazing eye,
 Forest and field, and hill and dale appear,
 With all the shapes over their surface spread :
 But, while the gross and visible frame of things
 Relinquishes its hold upon the sense,
 Yea almost on the Mind herself, and seems
 All unsubstantialized,—how loud the voice
 Of waters, with invigorated peal
 From the full river in the vale below,
 Ascending ! For on that superior height
 Who sits, is disencumbered from the press
 Of near obstructions, and is privileged
 To breathe in solitude, above the host
 Of ever-humming insects, 'mid thin air
 That suits not them. The murmur of the leaves
 Many and idle, visits not his ear :
 This he is freed from, and from thousand notes
 (Not less unceasing, not less vain than these,)
 By which the finer passages of sense
 Are occupied ; and the Soul, that would incline
 To listen, is prevented or deterred.

And may it not be hoped, that, placed by age
 In like removal, tranquil though severe,
 We are not so removed for utter loss ;
 But for some favour, suited to our need ?

What more than that the severing should confer
 Fresh power to commune with the invisible world,
 And hear the mighty stream of tendency
 Uttering, for elevation of our thought,
 A clear sonorous voice, inaudible
 To the vast multitude ; whose doom it is
 To run the giddy round of vain delight,
 Or fret and labour on the Plain below.

But, if to such sublime ascent the hopes
 Of Man may rise, as to a welcome close
 And termination of his mortal course ;
 Then only can such hope inspire whose minds
 Have not been starved by absolute neglect ;
 Nor bodies crushed by unremitting toil ;
 To whom kind Nature, therefore, may afford
 Proof of the sacred love she bears for all ;
 Whose birthright Reason, therefore, may ensure.
 For me, consulting what I feel within
 In times when most existence with herself
 Is satisfied, I cannot but believe,
 That, far as kindly Nature hath free scope
 And Reason's sway predominates ; even so far,
 Country, society, and time itself,
 That saps the individual's bodily frame,
 And lays the generations low in dust,
 Do, by the almighty Ruler's grace, partake
 Of one maternal spirit, bringing forth
 And cherishing with ever-constant love,
 That tires not, nor betrays. Our life is turned
 Out of her course, wherever man is made
 An offering, or a sacrifice, a tool
 Or implement, a passive thing employed
 As a brute mean, without acknowledgment
 Of common right or interest in the end ;
 Used or abused, as selfishness may prompt.
 Say, what can follow for a rational soul
 Perverted thus, but weakness in all good,
 And strength in evil ? Hence an after-call
 For chastisement, and custody, and bonds,
 And oft-times Death, avenger of the past,
 And the sole guardian in whose hands we dare
 Entrust the future.—Not for these sad issues
 Was Man created ; but to obey the law
 Of life, and hope, and action. And 'tis known
 That when we stand upon our native soil,
 Unelbowed by such objects as oppress
 Our active powers, those powers themselves become
 Strong to subvert our noxious qualities :
 They sweep distemper from the busy day,
 And make the chalice of the big round year
 Run o'er with gladness ; whence the Being moves
 In beauty through the world ; and all who see
 Bless him, rejoicing in his neighbourhood."

"Then," said the Solitary, "by what force
Of language shall a feeling heart express
Her sorrow for that multitude in whom
We look for health from seeds that have been sown
In sickness, and for increase in a power
That works but by extinction? On themselves
They cannot lean, nor turn to their own hearts
To know what they must do; their wisdom is
To look into the eyes of others, thence
To be instructed what they must avoid:
Or rather, let us say, how least observed,
How with most quiet and most silent death,
With the least taint and injury to the air
The oppressor breathes, their human form divine,
And their immortal soul, may waste away."

The Sage rejoined, "I thank you—you have
spared

My voice the utterance of a keen regret,
A wide compassion which with you I share.
When, heretofore, I placed before your sight
A Little-one, subjected to the arts
Of modern ingenuity, and made
The senseless member of a vast machine,
Serving as doth a spindle or a wheel;
Think not, that, pitying him, I could forget
The rustic Boy, who walks the fields, untaught;
The slave of ignorance, and oft of want,
And miserable hunger. Much, too much,
Of this unhappy lot, in early youth
We both have witnessed, lot which I myself
Shared, though in mild and merciful degree:
Yet was the mind to hinderances exposed,
Through which I struggled, not without distress
And sometimes injury, like a lamb enthralled
Mid thorns and brambles; or a bird that breaks
Through a strong net, and mounts upon the wind,
Though with her plumes impaired. If they, whose
souls

Should open while they range the richer fields
Of merry England, are obstructed less
By indigence, their ignorance is not less,
Nor less to be deplored. For who can doubt
That tens of thousands at this day exist
Such as the boy you painted, lineal heirs
Of those who once were vassals of her soil,
Following its fortunes like the beasts or trees
Which it sustained. But no one takes delight
In this oppression; none are proud of it;
It bears no sounding name, nor ever bore;
A standing grievance, an indigenous vice
Of every country under heaven. My thoughts
Were turned to evils that are new and chosen,
A bondage lurking under shape of good,—

Arts, in themselves beneficent and kind,
But all too fondly followed and too far;—
To victims, which the merciful can see
Nor think that they are victims—turned to wrongs,
By women, who have children of their own,
Beheld without compassion, yea with praise!
I spake of mischief by the wise diffused
With gladness, thinking that the more it spreads
The healthier, the securer, we become;
Delusion which a moment may destroy!
Lastly, I mourned for those whom I had seen
Corrupted and cast down, on favoured ground,
Where circumstance and nature had combined
To shelter innocence, and cherish love;
Who, but for this intrusion, would have lived,
Possessed of health, and strength, and peace of mind;
Thus would have lived, or never have been born.

Alas! what differs more than man from man!
And whence that difference? whence but from him-
self?

For see the universal Race endowed
With the same upright form!—The sun is fixed,
And the infinite magnificence of heaven
Fixed, within reach of every human eye;
The sleepless ocean murmurs for all ears;
The vernal field infuses fresh delight
Into all hearts. Throughout the world of sense,
Even as an object is sublime or fair,
That object is laid open to the view
Without reserve or veil; and as a power
Is salutary, or an influence sweet,
Are each and all enabled to perceive
That power, that influence, by impartial law.
Gifts nobler are vouchsafed alike to all;
Reason, and, with that reason, smiles and tears;
Imagination, freedom in the will;
Conscience to guide and check; and death to be
Foretasted, immortality conceived
By all,—a blissful immortality,
To them whose holiness on earth shall make
The Spirit capable of heaven, assured.
Strange, then, nor less than monstrous, might be
deemed

The failure, if the Almighty, to this point
Liberal and undistinguishing, should hide
The excellence of moral qualities
From common understanding; leaving truth
And virtue, difficult, abstruse, and dark;
Hard to be won, and only by a few;
Strange, should He deal herein with nice respects,
And frustrate all the rest! Believe it not:
The primal duties shine aloft—like stars;
The charities that soothe, and heal, and bless,

Are scattered at the feet of Man—like flowers.
 The generous inclination, the just rule,
 Kind wishes, and good actions, and pure thoughts—
 No mystery is here! Here is no boon
 For high—yet not for low; for proudly graced—
 Yet not for meek of heart. The smoke ascends
 To heaven as lightly from the cottage-hearth
 As from the haughtiest palace. He, whose soul
 Ponders this true equality, may walk
 The fields of earth with gratitude and hope;
 Yet, in that meditation, will he find
 Motive to sadder grief, as we have found;
 Lamenting ancient virtues overthrown,
 And for the injustice grieving, that hath made
 So wide a difference between man and man.

Then let us rather fix our gladdened thoughts
 Upon the brighter scene. How blest that pair
 Of blooming Boys (whom we beheld even now)
 Blest in their several and their common lot!
 A few short hours of each returning day
 The thriving prisoners of their village-school:
 And thence let loose, to seek their pleasant homes
 Or range the grassy lawn in vacancy;
 To breathe and to be happy, run and shout
 Idle,—but no delay, no harm, no loss;
 For every genial power of heaven and earth,
 Through all the seasons of the changeful year,
 Obsequiously doth take upon herself
 To labour for them; bringing each in turn
 The tribute of enjoyment, knowledge, health,
 Beauty, or strength! Such privilege is theirs,
 Granted alike in the outset of their course
 To both; and, if that partnership must cease,
 I grieve not,” to the Pastor here he turned,
 “Much as I glory in that child of yours,
 Repine not for his cottage-comrade, whom
 Belike no higher destiny awaits
 Than the old hereditary wish fulfilled;
 The wish for liberty to live—content
 With what Heaven grants, and die—in peace of
 mind,
 Within the bosom of his native vale.
 At least, whatever fate the noon of life
 Reserves for either, sure it is that both
 Have been permitted to enjoy the dawn;
 Whether regarded as a jocund time,
 That in itself may terminate, or lead
 In course of nature to a sober eve.
 Both have been fairly dealt with; looking back
 They will allow that justice has in them
 Been shown, alike to body and to mind.”

He paused, as if revolving in his soul

Some weighty matter; then, with fervent voice
 And an impassioned majesty, exclaimed—

“O for the coming of that glorious time
 When, prizing knowledge as her noblest wealth
 And best protection, this imperial Realm,
 While she exacts allegiance, shall admit
 An obligation, on her part, to *teach*
 Them who are born to serve her and obey;
 Binding herself by statute to secure
 For all the children whom her soil maintains
 The rudiments of letters, and inform
 The mind with moral and religious truth,
 Both understood and practised,—so that none,
 However destitute, be left to droop
 By timely culture unsustained; or run
 Into a wild disorder; or be forced
 To drudge through a weary life without the help
 Of intellectual implements and tools;
 A savage horde among the civilised,
 A servile band among the lordly free!
 This sacred right, the lisping babe proclaims
 To be inherent in him, by Heaven’s will,
 For the protection of his innocence;
 And the rude boy—who, having overpast
 The sinless age, by conscience is enrolled,
 Yet mutinously knits his angry brow,
 And lifts his wilful hand on mischief bent,
 Or turns the godlike faculty of speech
 To impious use—by process indirect
 Declares his due, while he makes known his need.
 —This sacred right is fruitlessly announced,
 This universal plea in vain addressed,
 To eyes and ears of parents who themselves
 Did, in the time of their necessity,
 Urge it in vain; and, therefore, like a prayer
 That from the humblest floor ascends to heaven,
 It mounts to reach the State’s parental ear;
 Who, if indeed she own a mother’s heart,
 And be not most unfeelingly devoid
 Of gratitude to Providence, will grant
 The unquestionable good—which, England, safe
 From interference of external force,
 May grant at leisure; without risk incurred
 That what in wisdom for herself she doth,
 Others shall e’er be able to undo.

Look! and behold, from Calpe’s sunburnt cliffs
 To the flat margin of the Baltic sea,
 Long-reverenced titles cast away as weeds;
 Laws overturned; and territory split,
 Like fields of ice rent by the polar wind,
 And forced to join in less obnoxious shapes
 Which, ere they gain consistence, by a gust

Of the same breath are shattered and destroyed.
 Meantime the sovereignty of these fair Isles
 Remains entire and indivisible:
 And, if that ignorance were removed, which breeds
 Within the compass of their several shores
 Dark discontent, or loud commotion, each
 Might still preserve the beautiful repose
 Of heavenly bodies shining in their spheres.
 —The discipline of slavery is unknown
 Among us,—hence the more do we require
 The discipline of virtue; order else
 Cannot subsist, nor confidence, nor peace.
 Thus, duties rising out of good possesst
 And prudent caution needful to avert
 Impending evil, equally require
 That the whole people should be taught and trained.
 So shall licentiousness and black resolve
 Be rooted out, and virtuous habits take
 Their place; and genuine piety descend,
 Like an inheritance, from age to age.

With such foundations laid, avauant the fear
 Of numbers crowded on their native soil,
 To the prevention of all healthful growth
 Through mutual injury! Rather in the law
 Of increase and the mandate from above
 Rejoice!—and ye have special cause for joy.
 —For, as the element of air affords
 An easy passage to the industrious bees
 Fraught with their burthens; and a way as smooth
 For those ordained to take their sounding flight
 From the thronged hive, and settle where they list
 In fresh abodes—their labour to renew;
 So the wide waters, open to the power,
 The will, the instincts, and appointed needs
 Of Britain, do invite her to cast off
 Her swarms, and in succession send them forth;
 Bound to establish new communities
 On every shore whose aspect favours hope
 Or bold adventure; promising to skill
 And perseverance their deserved reward.

Yes," he continued, kindling as he spake,
 "Change wide, and deep, and silently performed,
 This Land shall witness; and as days roll on,
 Earth's universal frame shall feel the effect;
 Even till the smallest habitable rock,
 Beaten by lonely billows, hear the songs
 Of humanised society; and bloom
 With civil arts, that shall breathe forth their
 fragrance,
 A grateful tribute to all-ruling Heaven.
 From culture, unexclusively bestowed
 On Albion's noble Race in freedom born,

Expect these mighty issues: from the pains
 And faithful care of unambitious schools
 Instructing simple childhood's ready ear:
 Thence look for these magnificent results!
 —Vast the circumference of hope—and ye
 Are at its centre, British Lawgivers;
 Ah! sleep not there in shame! Shall Wisdom's voice
 From out the bosom of these troubled times
 Repeat the dictates of her calmer mind,
 And shall the venerable halls ye fill
 Refuse to echo the sublime decree?
 Trust not to partial care a general good;
 Transfer not to futurity a work
 Of urgent need.—Your Country must complete
 Her glorious destiny. Begin even now,
 Now, when oppression, like the Egyptian plague
 Of darkness, stretched o'er guilty Europe, makes
 The brightness more conspicuous that invests
 The happy Island where ye think and act;
 Now, when destruction is a prime pursuit,
 Show to the wretched nations for what end
 The powers of civil polity were given."

Abruptly here, but with a graceful air,
 The Sage broke off. No sooner had he ceased
 Than, looking forth, the gentle Lady said,
 "Behold the shades of afternoon have fallen
 Upon this flowery slope; and see—beyond—
 The silvery lake is streaked with placid blue;
 As if preparing for the peace of evening.
 How temptingly the landscape shines! The air
 Breathes invitation; easy is the walk
 To the lake's margin, where a boat lies moored
 Under a sheltering tree."—Upon this hint
 We rose together: all were pleased; but most
 The beauteous girl, whose cheek was flushed with joy.
 Light as a sunbeam glides along the hills
 She vanished—eager to impart the scheme
 To her loved brother and his shy compeer.
 —Now was there bustle in the Vicar's house
 And earnest preparation.—Forth we went,
 And down the vale along the streamlet's edge
 Pursued our way, a broken company,
 Mute or conversing, single or in pairs.
 Thus having reached a bridge, that overarched
 The hasty rivulet where it lay becalmed
 In a deep pool, by happy chance we saw
 A two-fold image; on a grassy bank
 A snow-white ram, and in the crystal flood
 Another and the same! Most beautiful,
 On the green turf, with his imperial front
 Shaggy and bold, and wreathed horns superb,
 The breathing creature stood; as beautiful,
 Beneath him, shewed his shadowy counterpart.

Each had his glowing mountains, each his sky,
And each seemed centre of his own fair world :
Antipodes unconscious of each other,
Yet, in partition, with their several spheres,
Blended in perfect stillness, to our sight !

“ Ah ! what a pity were it to disperse,
Or to disturb, so fair a spectacle,
And yet a breath can do it ! ”

These few words

The Lady whispered, while we stood and gazed
Gathered together, all in still delight,
Not without awe. Thence passing on, she said
In like low voice to my particular ear,
“ I love to hear that eloquent old Man
Pour forth his meditations, and descant
On human life from infancy to age.
How pure his spirit ! in what vivid hues
His mind gives back the various forms of things,
Caught in their fairest, happiest, attitude !
While he is speaking, I have power to see
Even as he sees ; but when his voice hath ceased,
Then, with a sigh, sometimes I feel, as now,
That combinations so serene and bright
Cannot be lasting in a world like ours,
Whose highest beauty, beautiful as it is,
Like that reflected in yon quiet pool,
Seems but a fleeting sun-beam's gift, whose peace
The sufferance only of a breath of air ! ”

More had she said—but sportive shouts were heard
Sent from the jocund hearts of those two Boys,
Who, bearing each a basket on his arm,
Down the green field came tripping after us.
With caution we embarked ; and now the pair
For prouder service were address ; but each,
Wishful to leave an opening for my choice,
Dropped the light oar his eager hand had seized.
Thanks given for that becoming courtesy,
Their place I took—and for a grateful office
Pregnant with recollections of the time
When, on thy bosom, spacious Windermere !
A Youth, I practised this delightful art ;
Tossed on the waves alone, or 'mid a crew
Of joyous comrades. Soon as the reedy marge
Was cleared, I dipped, with arms accordant, oars
Free from obstruction ; and the boat advanced
Through crystal water, smoothly as a hawk,
That, disentangled from the shady boughs
Of some thick wood, her place of covert, cleaves
With correspondent wings the abyss of air.
—“ Observe,” the Vicar said, “ yon rocky isle
With birch-trees fringed ; my hand shall guide
the helm,

While thitherward we shape our course ; or while
We seek that other, on the western shore ;
Where the bare columns of those lofty firs,
Supporting gracefully a massy dome
Of sombre foliage, seem to imitate
A Grecian temple rising from the Deep.”

“ Turn where we may,” said I, “ we cannot err
In this delicious region.”—Cultured slopes,
Wild tracts of forest-ground, and scattered groves,
And mountains bare, or clothed with ancient woods,
Surrounded us ; and, as we held our way
Along the level of the glassy flood,
They ceased not to surround us ; change of place,
From kindred features diversely combined,
Producing change of beauty ever new.
—Ah ! that such beauty, varying in the light
Of living nature, cannot be portrayed
By words, nor by the pencil's silent skill ;
But is the property of him alone
Who hath beheld it, noted it with care,
And in his mind recorded it with love !
Suffice it, therefore, if the rural Muse
Vouchsafe sweet influence, while her Poet speaks
Of trivial occupations well devised,
And unsought pleasures springing up by chance ;
As if some friendly Genius had ordained
That, as the day thus far had been enriched
By acquisition of sincere delight,
The same should be continued to its close.

One spirit animating old and young,
A gipsy-fire we kindled on the shore
Of the fair Isle with birch-trees fringed—and there,
Merrily seated in a ring, partook
A choice repast—served by our young companions
With rival earnestness and kindred glee.
Launched from our hands the smooth stone
skimmed the lake ;
With shouts we raised the echoes ;—stiller sounds
The lovely Girl supplied—a simple song,
Whose low tones reached not to the distant rocks
To be repeated thence, but gently sank
Into our hearts ; and charmed the peaceful flood.
Rapaciously we gathered flowery spoils
From land and water ; lilies of each hue—
Golden and white, that float upon the waves,
And court the wind ; and leaves of that shy plant,
(Her flowers were shed) the lily of the vale,
That loves the ground, and from the sun withholds
Her pensive beauty ; from the breeze her sweets.

Such product, and such pastime, did the place
And season yield ; but, as we re-embarked,

Leaving, in quest of other scenes, the shore
Of that wild spot, the Solitary said
In a low voice, yet careless who might hear,
"The fire, that burned so brightly to our wish,
Where is it now?—Deserted on the beach—
Dying, or dead! Nor shall the fanning breeze
Revive its ashes. What care we for this,
Whose ends are gained? Behold an emblem here
Of one day's pleasure, and all mortal joys!
And, in this unpremeditated slight
Of that which is no longer needed, see
The common course of human gratitude!"

This plaintive note disturbed not the repose
Of the still evening. Right across the lake
Our pinnacle moves; then, coasting creek and bay,
Glades we behold, and into thickets peep,
Where couch the spotted deer; or raised our eyes
To shaggy steeps on which the careless goat
Browsed by the side of dashing waterfalls;
And thus the bark, meandering with the shore,
Pursued her voyage, till a natural pier
Of jutting rock invited us to land.

Alert to follow as the Pastor led,
We clomb a green hill's side; and, as we clomb,
The Valley, opening out her bosom, gave
Fair prospect, intercepted less and less,
O'er the flat meadows and indented coast
Of the smooth lake, in compass seen:—far off,
And yet conspicuous, stood the old Church-tower,
In majesty presiding over fields
And habitations seemingly preserved
From all intrusion of the restless world
By rocks impassable and mountains huge.

Soft heath this elevated spot supplied,
And choice of moss-clad stones, whereon we couched
Or sate reclined; admiring quietly
The general aspect of the scene; but each
Not seldom over anxious to make known
His own discoveries; or to favourite points
Directing notice, merely from a wish
To impart a joy, imperfect while unshared.
That rapturous moment never shall I forget
When these particular interests were effaced
From every mind!—Already had the sun,
Sinking with less than ordinary state,
Attained his western bound; but rays of light—
Now suddenly diverging from the orb
Retired behind the mountain tops or veiled
By the dense air—shot upwards to the crown
Of the blue firmament—aloft, and wide:
And multitudes of little floating clouds,

Through their ethereal texture pierced—ere we,
Who saw, of change were conscious—had become
Vivid as fire; clouds separately poised,—
Innumerable multitude of forms
Scattered through half the circle of the sky;
And giving back, and shedding each on each,
With prodigal communion, the bright hues
Which from the unapparent fount of glory
They had imbibed, and ceased not to receive.
That which the heavens displayed, the liquid deep
Repeated; but with unity sublime!

While from the grassy mountain's open side
We gazed, in silence hushed, with eyes intent
On the refulgent spectacle, diffused
Through earth, sky, water, and all visible space,
The Priest in holy transport thus exclaimed:

"Eternal Spirit! universal God!
Power inaccessible to human thought,
Save by degrees and steps which thou hast deigned
To furnish; for this effluence of thyself,
To the infirmity of mortal sense
Vouchsafed; this local transitory type
Of thy paternal splendours, and the pomp
Of those who fill thy courts in highest heaven,
The radiant Cherubim;—accept the thanks
Which we, thy humble Creatures, here convened,
Presume to offer; we, who—from the breast
Of the frail earth, permitted to behold
The faint reflections only of thy face—
Are yet exalted, and in soul adore!
Such as they are who in thy presence stand
Unsullied, incorruptible, and drink
Imperishable majesty streamed forth
From thy empyreal throne, the elect of earth
Shall be—divested at the appointed hour
Of all dishonour, cleansed from mortal stain.
—Accomplish, then, their number; and conclude
Time's weary course! Or if, by thy decree,
The consummation that will come by stealth
Be yet far distant, let thy Word prevail,
Oh! let thy Word prevail, to take away
The sting of human nature. Spread the law,
As it is written in thy holy book,
Throughout all lands: let every nation hear
The high behest, and every heart obey;
Both for the love of purity, and hope
Which it affords, to such as do thy will
And persevere in good, that they shall rise,
To have a nearer view of thee, in heaven.
—Father of good! this prayer in bounty grant,
In mercy grant it, to thy wretched sons.
Then, nor till then, shall persecution cease,

And cruel wars expire. The way is marked,
 The guide appointed, and the ransom paid.
 Alas! the nations, who of yore received
 These tidings, and in Christian temples meet
 The sacred truth to acknowledge, linger still;
 Preferring bonds and darkness to a state
 Of holy freedom, by redeeming love
 Proffered to all, while yet on earth detained.

So fare the many; and the thoughtful few,
 Who in the anguish of their souls bewail
 This dire perverseness, cannot choose but ask,
 Shall it endure?—Shall enmity and strife,
 Falsehood and guile, be left to sow their seed;
 And the kind never perish? Is the hope
 Fallacious, or shall righteousness obtain
 A peaceable dominion, wide as earth,
 And ne'er to fail? Shall that blest day arrive
 When they, whose choice or lot it is to dwell
 In crowded cities, without fear shall live
 Studious of mutual benefit; and he,
 Whom Morn awakens, among dews and flowers
 Of every clime, to till the lonely field,
 Be happy in himself?—The law of faith
 Working through love, such conquest shall it gain,
 Such triumph over sin and guilt achieve?
 Almighty Lord, thy further grace impart!
 And with that help the wonder shall be seen
 Fulfilled, the hope accomplished; and thy praise
 Be sung with transport and unceasing joy.

Once," and with mild demeanour, as he spake,
 On us the venerable Pastor turned
 His beaming eye that had been raised to Heaven,
 "Once, while the Name, Jehovah, was a sound
 Within the circuit of this sea-girt isle
 Unheard, the savage nations bowed the head
 To Gods delighting in remorseless deeds;
 Gods which themselves had fashioned, to promote
 Ill purposes, and flatter foul desires.
 Then, in the bosom of yon mountain-cove,
 To those inventions of corrupted man
 Mysterious rites were solemnised; and there—
 Amid impending rocks and gloomy woods—
 Of those terrific Idols some received
 Such dismal service, that the loudest voice
 Of the swollen cataracts (which now are heard
 Soft murmuring) was too weak to overcome,
 Though aided by wild winds, the groans and shrieks
 Of human victims, offered up to appease
 Or to propitiate. And, if living eyes
 Had visionary faculties to see
 The thing that hath been as the thing that is,
 Aghast we might behold this crystal Mere

Bedimmed with smoke, in wreaths voluminous,
 Flung from the body of devouring fires,
 To Taranis erected on the heights
 By priestly hands, for sacrifice performed
 Exultingly, in view of open day
 And full assemblage of a barbarous host;
 Or to Andates, female Power! who gave
 (For so they fancied) glorious victory.
 —A few rude monuments of mountain-stone
 Survive; all else is swept away.—How bright
 The appearances of things! From such, how
 changed.

The existing worship; and with those compared,
 The worshippers how innocent and blest!
 So wide the difference, a willing mind
 Might almost think, at this affecting hour,
 That paradise, the lost abode of man,
 Was raised again: and to a happy few,
 In its original beauty, here restored.

Whence but from thee, the true and only God,
 And from the faith derived through Him who bled
 Upon the cross, this marvellous advance
 Of good from evil; as if one extreme
 Were left, the other gained.—O ye, who come
 To kneel devoutly in yon reverend Pile,
 Called to such office by the peaceful sound
 Of sabbath bells; and ye, who sleep in earth,
 All cares forgotten, round its hallowed walls!
 For you, in presence of this little band
 Gathered together on the green hill-side,
 Your Pastor is emboldened to prefer
 Vocal thanksgivings to the eternal King;
 Whose love, whose counsel, whose commands, have
 made

Your very poorest rich in peace of thought
 And in good works; and him, who is endowed
 With scantiest knowledge, master of all truth
 Which the salvation of his soul requires.
 Conscious of that abundant favour showered
 On you, the children of my humble care,
 And this dear land, our country, while on earth
 We sojourn, have I lifted up my soul,
 Joy giving voice to fervent gratitude.
 These barren rocks, your stern inheritance;
 These fertile fields, that recompense your pains;
 The shadowy vale, the sunny mountain-top;
 Woods waving in the wind their lofty heads,
 Or hushed; the roaring waters, and the still—
 They see the offering of my lifted hands,
 They hear my lips present their sacrifice,
 They know if I be silent, morn or even:
 For, though in whispers speaking, the full heart
 Will find a vent; and thought is praise to him,

Andible praise, to thee, omniscient Mind,
From whom all gifts descend, all blessings flow !”

This vesper-service closed, without delay,
From that exalted station to the plain
Descending, we pursued our homeward course,
In mute composure, o’er the shadowy lake,
Under a faded sky. No trace remained
Of those celestial splendours ; grey the vault—
Pure, cloudless, ether ; and the star of eve
Was wanting ; but inferior lights appeared
Faintly, too faint almost for sight ; and some
Above the darkened hills stood boldly forth
In twinkling lustre, ere the boat attained
Her mooring-place ; where, to the sheltering tree,
Our youthful Voyagers bound fast her prow,
With prompt yet careful hands. This done, we paced
The dewy fields ; but ere the Vicar’s door
Was reached, the Solitary checked his steps ;
Then, intermingling thanks, on each bestowed
A farewell salutation ; and, the like
Receiving, took the slender path that leads
To the one cottage in the lonely dell :

But turned not without welcome promise made
That he would share the pleasures and pursuits
Of yet another summer’s day, not loth
To wander with us through the fertile vales,
And o’er the mountain-wastes. “ Another sun,”
Said he, “ shall shine upon us, ere we part ;
Another sun, and peradventure more ;
If time, with free consent, be yours to give,
And season favours.”

To enfeebled Power,
From this communion with uninjured Minds,
What renovation had been brought ; and what
Degree of healing to a wounded spirit,
Dejected, and habitually disposed
To seek, in degradation of the Kind,
Excuse and solace for her own defects ;
How far those erring notions were reformed ;
And whether aught, of tendency as good
And pure, from further intercourse ensued ;
This—if delightful hopes, as heretofore,
Inspire the serious song, and gentle Hearts
Cherish, and lofty Minds approve the past—
My future labours may not leave untold.

NOTES.

Page 16.

'And, hovering, round it often did a raven fly.'

From a short MS. poem read to me when an undergraduate, by my schoolfellow and friend, Charles Farish, long since deceased. The verses were by a brother of his, a man of promising genius, who died young.

Page 24.

'The Borderers.'

This Dramatic Piece, as noticed in its title-page, was composed in 1795-6. It lay nearly from that time till within the last two or three months unregarded among my papers, without being mentioned even to my most intimate friends. Having, however, impressions upon my mind which made me unwilling to destroy the MS., I determined to undertake the responsibility of publishing it during my own life, rather than impose upon my successors the task of deciding its fate. Accordingly it has been revised with some care; but, as it was at first written, and is now published, without any view to its exhibition upon the stage, not the slightest alteration has been made in the conduct of the story, or the composition of the characters; above all, in respect to the two leading Persons of the Drama, I felt no inducement to make any change. The study of human nature suggests this awful truth, that, as in the trials to which life subjects us, sin and crime are apt to start from their very opposite qualities, so are there no limits to the hardening of the heart, and the perversion of the understanding to which they may carry their slaves. During my long residence in France, while the Revolution was rapidly advancing to its extreme of wickedness, I had frequent opportunities of being an eye-witness of this process, and it was while that knowledge was fresh upon my memory, that the Tragedy of "The Borderers" was composed.

Page 64.

'The Norman boy.'

'Among ancient Trees there are few, I believe, at least in France, so worthy of attention as an Oak which may be seen in the 'Pays de Caux,' about a league from Yvetot, close to the church, and in the burial-ground of Allonville.

'The height of this Tree does not answer to its girth; the trunk, from the roots to the summit, forms a complete cone; and the inside of this cone is hollow throughout the whole of its height.

'Such is the Oak of Allonville, in its state of nature. The hand of Man, however, has endeavoured to impress upon it a character still more interesting, by adding a religious feeling to the respect which its age naturally inspires.

'The lower part of its hollow trunk has been transformed into a Chapel of six or seven feet in diameter,

carefully wainscotted and paved, and an open iron gate guards the humble Sanctuary.

'Leading to it there is a staircase, which twists round the body of the Tree. At certain seasons of the year divine service is performed in this Chapel.

'The summit has been broken off many years, but there is a surface at the top of the trunk, of the diameter of a very large tree, and from it rises a pointed roof, covered with slates, in the form of a steeple, which is surmounted with an iron Cross, that rises in a picturesque manner from the middle of the leaves, like an ancient Hermitage above the surrounding Wood.

'Over the entrance to the Chapel an Inscription appears, which informs us it was erected by the Abbé du Détroit, Curate of Allonville in the year 1696; and over a door is another, dedicating it 'To Our Lady of Peace.'

Vide 14 No. Saturday Magazine.

Page 117.

'To the Daisy.'

This Poem, and two others to the same Flower, were written in the year 1802; which is mentioned, because in some of the ideas, though not in the manner in which those ideas are connected, and likewise even in some of the expressions, there is a resemblance to passages in a Poem (lately published) of Mr. Montgomery's, entitled, a Field Flower. This being said, Mr. Montgomery will not think any apology due to him; I cannot, however, help addressing him in the words of the Father of English Poets.

'Though it happe me to rehersin—

'That ye han in your freshe songis saied,

'Forberith me, and beth not ill apaied,

'Sith that ye se I doe it in the honour

'Of Love, and eke in service of the Flour,'

1807.

Page 120.

'The Seven Sisters.'

The Story of this Poem is from the German of FREDERICA BAUN.

Page 131.

'The Waggoner.'

Several years after the event that forms the subject of the Poem, in company with my friend, the late Mr. Coleridge, I happened to fall in with the person to whom the name of Benjamin is given. Upon our expressing regret that we had not, for a long time, seen upon the road either him or his waggon, he said:—"They could not do without me; and as to the man who was put in my place, no good could come out of him; he was a man of no ideas."

The fact of my discarded hero's getting the horses out of a great difficulty with a word, as related in the poem, was told me by an eye-witness.

Page 131.

'The buzzing Dor-hawk, round and round, is wheeling,—'

When the Poem was first written the note of the bird was thus described:—

*'The Night-hawk is singing his frog-like tune,
Twirling his watchman's rattle about—'*

but from unwillingness to startle the reader at the outset by so bold a mode of expression, the passage was altered as it now stands.

Page 136.

After the line, *'Can any mortal clog come to her,'* followed in the MS. an incident which has been kept back. Part of the suppressed verses shall here be given as a gratification of private feeling, which the well-disposed reader will find no difficulty in excusing. They are now printed for the first time.

'Can any mortal clog come to her ?

It can :

But Benjamin, in his vexation,
Possesses inward consolation ;
He knows his ground, and hopes to find
A spot with all things to his mind,
An upright mural block of stone,
Moist with pure water trickling down.
A slender spring ; but kind to man
It is, a true Samaritan ;
Close to the highway, pouring out
Its offering from a chink or spout ;
Whence all, howe'er athirst, or drooping
With toil, may drink, and without stooping.

Cries Benjamin, "Where is it, where ?
Voice it hath none, but must be near."

—A star, declining towards the west,
Upon the watery surface threw
Its image tremulously imprest,
That just marked out the object and withdrew :
Right welcome service !

ROCK OF NAMES !

Light is the strain, but not unjust
To Thee, and thy memorial-trust
That once seemed only to express
Love that was love in idleness ;
Tokens, as year hath followed year
How changed, alas, in character !
For they were graven on thy smooth breast
By hands of those my soul loved best ;
Meek women, men as true and brave
As ever went to a hopeful grave :
Their hands and mine, when side by side
With kindred zeal and mutual pride,
We worked until the Initials took
Shapes that defied a scornful look.—
Long as for us a genial feeling
Survives, or one in need of healing,
The power, dear Rock, around thee cast,
Thy monumental power, shall last
For me and mine ! O thought of pain,
That would impair it or profane !
Take all in kindness then, as said
With a staid heart but playful head ;
And fail not Thou, loved Rock ! to keep
Thy charge when we are laid asleep.'

Page 158.

'Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle.'

Henry Lord Clifford, &c. &c., who is the subject of this Poem, was the son of John Lord Clifford, who was slain at Towton Field, which John Lord Clifford, as is known

to the reader of English History, was the person who after the battle of Wakefield slew, in the pursuit, the young Earl of Rutland, son of the Duke of York, who had fallen in the battle, 'in part of revenge' (say the Authors of the History of Cumberland and Westmoreland) ; 'for the Earl's Father had slain his.' A deed which worthily blemished the author (saith Speed) ; but who, as he adds, 'dare promise any thing temperate of himself in the heat of martial fury ? chiefly, when it was resolved not to leave any branch of the York line standing ; for so one maketh this Lord to speak.' This, no doubt, I would observe by the bye, was an action sufficiently in the vindictive spirit of the times, and yet not altogether so bad as represented ; 'for the Earl was no child, as some writers would have him, but able to bear arms, being sixteen or seventeen years of age, as is evident from this, (say the Memoirs of the Countess of Pembroke, who was laudably anxious to wipe away, as far as could be, this stigma from the illustrious name to which she was born,) that he was the next Child to King Edward the Fourth, which his mother had by Richard Duke of York, and that King was then eighteen years of age : and for the small distance betwixt her children, see Austin Vincent, in his Book of Nobility, p. 622, where he writes of them all. It may further be observed, that Lord Clifford, who was then himself only twenty-five years of age, had been a leading man and commander, two or three years together in the army of Lancaster, before this time ; and, therefore, would be less likely to think that the Earl of Rutland might be entitled to mercy from his youth.—But, independent of this act, at best a cruel and savage one, the Family of Clifford had done enough to draw upon them the vehement hatred of the House of York : so that after the Battle of Towton there was no hope for them but in flight and concealment. Henry, the subject of the Poem, was deprived of his estate and honours during the space of twenty-four years ; all which time he lived as a shepherd in Yorkshire, or in Cumberland, where the estate of his Father-in-law (Sir Lancelot Threlkeld) lay. He was restored to his estate and honours in the first year of Henry the Seventh. It is recorded that, 'when called to Parliament, he behaved nobly and wisely ; but otherwise came seldom to London or the Court ; and rather delighted to live in the country, where he repaired several of his Castles, which had gone to decay during the late troubles.' Thus far is chiefly collected from Nicholson and Burn ; and I can add, from my own knowledge, that there is a tradition current in the village of Threlkeld and its neighbourhood, his principal retreat, that, in the course of his shepherd-life, he had acquired great astronomical knowledge. I cannot conclude this note without adding a word upon the subject of those numerous and noble feudal Edifices, spoken of in the Poem, the ruins of some of which are, at this day, so great an ornament to that interesting country. The Cliffords had always been distinguished for an honourable pride in these Castles ; and we have seen that, after the wars of York and Lancaster, they were rebuilt ; in the civil wars of Charles the First they were again laid waste, and again restored almost to their former magnificence by the celebrated Lady Anne Clifford, Countess of Pembroke, &c. &c. Not more than twenty-five years after this was done, when the estates of Clifford had passed into the Family of Tufton, three of these Castles, namely, Brough, Brougham, and Pendragon, were demolished, and the timber and other materials sold by Thomas Earl of Thanet. We will hope that, when this poem was issued, the Earl had not consulted the text of Isaiah, 58th chap. 12th verse, to which the inscription placed over the gate of Pendragon Castle, by the Countess of Pembroke (I believe his Grandmother), at the time she repaired that structure, refers the reader :—*'And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places : thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations ; and thou shalt be called the*

repairer of the breach, the restorer of paths to dwell in. The Earl of Thanet, the present possessor of the Estates, with a due respect for the memory of his ancestors, and a proper sense of the value and beauty of these remains of antiquity, has (I am told) given orders that they shall be preserved from all depredations.

Page 158.

'Earth helped him with the cry of blood.'

This line is from "The Battle of Bosworth Field," by Sir John Beaumont (brother to the Dramatist), whose poems are written with much spirit, elegance, and harmony; and have deservedly been reprinted lately in Chalmers' Collection of English Poets.

Page 159.

*'And both the undying Fish that swim
Through Bowscale-Tarn,' &c.*

It is imagined by the people of the country that there are two immortal Fish, inhabitants of this Tarn, which lies in the mountains not far from Threlkeld.—Blencathara, mentioned before, is the old and proper name of the mountain vulgarly called Saddleback.

Page 159.

*'Armour rusting in his Halls
On the blood of Clifford calls.'*

The martial character of the Cliffords is well known to the readers of English history; but it may not be improper here to say, by way of comment on these lines and what follows, that besides several others who perished in the same manner, the four immediate Progenitors of the Person in whose hearing this is supposed to be spoken, all died in the Field.

Page 165.

'Dion.'

This poem began with the following stanza, which has been displaced on account of its detaining the reader too long from the subject, and as rather precluding, than preparing for, the due effect of the allusion to the genius of Plato:—

Fair is the Swan, whose majesty, prevailing
O'er breezeless water, on Locarno's lake,
Bears him on while proudly sailing
He leaves behind a moon-illumin'd wake:
Behold! the mantling spirit of reserve
Fashions his neck into a goodly curve;
An arch thrown back between luxuriant wings
Of whitest garniture, like fir-tree boughs
To which, on some unruddied morning, clings
A flaky weight of winter's purest snows!
—Behold!—as with a gushing impulse heaves
That downy prow, and softly cleaves
The mirror of the crystal flood,
Vanish inverted hill, and shadowy wood,
And pendent rocks, where'er, in gliding state,
Winds the mute Creature without visible Mate
Or Rival, save the Queen of night
Showering down a silver light,
From heaven, upon her chosen Favourite!

Page 168.

'Woeing hill'

—'awhile the living hill
Heaved with convulsive throes, and all was still.'

DR. DARWIN.

Page 173.

'The Wishing-gate.'

'In the Vale of Grasmere, by the side of the old highway leading to Ambleside, is a gate which, time out of mind, has been called the Wishing-gate.'

Having been told, upon what I thought good authority, that this gate had been destroyed, and the opening, where it hung, walled up, I gave vent immediately to my feelings in these stanzas. But going to the place some time after, I found, with much delight, my old favourite unmolested.

Page 197.

'Something less than joy, but more than dull content.'

COUNTESS OF WINCHILSEA.

Page 211.

'Wild Redbreast,' &c.

This Sonnet, as Poetry, explains itself, yet the scene of the incident having been a wild wood, it may be doubted, as a point of natural history, whether the bird was aware that his attentions were bestowed upon a human, or even a living, creature. But a Redbreast will perch upon the foot of a gardener at work, and alight on the handle of the spade when his hand is half upon it—this I have seen. And under my own roof I have witnessed affecting instances of the creature's friendly visits to the chambers of sick persons, as described in the verses to the Redbreast, page 105. One of these welcome intruders used frequently to roost upon a nail in the wall, from which a picture had hung, and was ready, as morning came, to pipe his song in the hearing of the Invalid, who had been long confined to her room. These attachments to a particular person, when marked and continued, used to be reckoned ominous; but the superstition is passing away.

Page 218.

The following is extracted from the journal of my fellow-traveller, to which, as persons acquainted with my poems will know I have been obliged on other occasions:—

Dumfries, August, 1803.

'On our way to the church-yard where Burns is buried, we were accompanied by a bookseller, who showed us the outside of Burns's house, where he had lived the last three years of his life, and where he died. It has a mean appearance, and is in a bye situation; the front whitewashed; dirty about the doors, as most Scotch houses are; flowering plants in the window. Went to visit his grave; he lies in a corner of the churchyard, and his second son, Francis Wallace, beside him. There is no stone to mark the spot; but a hundred guineas have been collected to be expended upon some sort of monument. 'There,' said the bookseller, pointing to a pompous monument, 'lies Mr.—(I have forgotten the name)—a remarkably clever man; he was an attorney, and scarcely ever lost a cause he undertook. Burns made many a lampoon upon him, and there they rest as you see.' We looked at Burns's grave with melancholy and painful reflections, repeating to each other his own poet's epitaph:—

'Is there a man, &c.

'The churchyard is full of grave-stones and expensive monuments, in all sorts of fantastic shapes—obelisk-wise, pillar-wise, &c. When our guide had left us we turned again to Burns's grave, and afterwards went to his house, wishing to inquire after Mrs. Burns, who was gone to spend some time by the sea-shore with her children. We spoke to the maid-servant at the door, who invited us forward, and we sat down in the parlour.

The walls were coloured with a blue wash ; on one side of the fire was a mahogany desk ; opposite the window a clock, which Burns mentions, in one of his letters, having received as a present. The house was cleanly and neat in the inside, the stairs of stone scoured white, the kitchen on the right side of the passage, the parlour on the left. In the room above the parlour the poet died, and his son, very lately, in the same room. The servant told us she had lived four years with Mrs. Burns, who was now in great sorrow for the death of Wallace. She said that Mrs. B.'s youngest son was now at Christ's Hospital. We were glad to leave Dumfries, where we could think of little but poor Burns, and his moving about on that unpoetic ground. In our road to Brownhill, the next stage, we passed Ellisland, at a little distance on our right—his farm-house. Our pleasure in looking round would have been still greater, if the road had led us nearer the spot.

* * * * *
 'I cannot take leave of this country which we passed through to-day, without mentioning that we saw the Cumberland mountains within half-a-mile of Ellisland, Burns's house, the last view we had of them. Drayton has prettily described the connexion which this neighbourhood has with ours, when he makes Skiddaw say,—

'Scruffel, from the sky
 That Annandale doth crown, with a most amorous eye
 Salutes me every day, or at my pride looks grim,
 Oft threatening me with clouds, as I oft threaten him.'

'These lines came to my brother's memory, as well as the Cumberland saying,—

'If Skiddaw hath a cap
 Scruffel wots well of that.'

'We talked of Burns, and of the prospect he must have had, perhaps from his own door, of Skiddaw and his companions ; indulging ourselves in the fancy that we might have been personally known to each other, and he have looked upon those objects with more pleasure for our sakes.'

Page 236.

'Jones ! as from Calais southward.'

(See Dedication to Descriptive Sketches.)

This excellent Person, one of my earliest and dearest friends, died in the year 1835. We were under-graduates together of the same year, at the same college ; and companions in many a delightful ramble through his own romantic Country of North Wales. Much of the latter part of his life he passed in comparative solitude ; which I know was often cheered by remembrance of our youthful adventures, and of the beautiful regions which, at home and abroad, we had visited together. Our long friendship was never subject to a moment's interruption, —and, while revising these volumes for the last time, I have been so often reminded of my loss, with a not unpleasant sadness, that I trust the Reader will excuse this passing mention of a Man who well deserves from me something more than so brief a notice. Let me only add, that during the middle part of his life he resided many years (as Incumbent of the Living) at a Parsonage in Oxfordshire, which is the subject of the 7th of the "Miscellaneous Sonnets," Part 3.

Page 237. Sonnet VII.

In this and a succeeding Sonnet on the same subject, let me be understood as a Poet availing himself of the situation which the King of Sweden occupied, and of the principles AVOWED IN HIS MANIFESTOS ; as laying hold of these advantages for the purpose of embodying moral truths. This remark might, perhaps, as well have been suppressed ; for to those who may be in sympathy with

the course of these Poems, it will be superfluous ; and will, I fear, be thrown away upon that other class, whose besotted admiration of the intoxicated despot hereafter placed in contrast with him, is the most melancholy evidence of degradation in British feeling and intellect which the times have furnished.

Page 240. Sonnet xxvii.

'Danger which they fear, and honour which they understand not.'

Words in Lord Brooke's Life of Sir P. Sidney.

Page 244.

'Zaragoza.'

In this Sonnet I am under some obligations to one of an Italian author, to which I cannot refer.

Page 248.

The event is thus recorded in the journals of the day : — 'When the Austrians took Hockheim, in one part of the engagement they got to the brow of the hill, whence they had their first view of the Rhine. They instantly halted—not a gun was fired—not a voice heard : they stood gazing on the river with those feelings which the events of the last fifteen years at once called up. Prince Schwartzberg rode up to know the cause of this sudden stop ; they then gave three cheers, rushed after the enemy, and drove them into the water.'

Page 252.

'Thanksgiving Ode.'

Wholly unworthy of touching upon the momentous subject here treated would that Poet be, before whose eyes the present distresses under which this kingdom labours could interpose a veil sufficiently thick to hide, or even to obscure, the splendour of this great moral triumph. If I have given way to exultation, unchecked by these distresses, it might be sufficient to protect me from a charge of insensibility, should I state my own belief that the sufferings will be transitory. Upon the wisdom of a very large majority of the British nation rested that generosity which poured out the treasures of this country for the deliverance of Europe : and in the same national wisdom, presiding in time of peace over an energy not inferior to that which has been displayed in war, they confide, who encourage a firm hope, that the cup of our wealth will be gradually replenished. There will, doubtless, be no few ready to indulge in regrets and repinings ; and to feed a morbid satisfaction, by aggravating these burthens in imagination ; in order that calamity so confidently prophesied, as it has not taken the shape which their sagacity allotted to it, may appear as grievous as possible under another. But the body of the nation will not quarrel with the gain, because it might have been purchased at a less price ; and, acknowledging in these sufferings, which they feel to have been in a great degree unavoidable, a consecration of their noble efforts, they will vigorously apply themselves to remedy the evil.

Nor is it at the expense of rational patriotism, or in disregard of sound philosophy, that I have given vent to feelings tending to encourage a martial spirit in the bosoms of my countrymen, at a time when there is a general outcry against the prevalence of these dispositions. The British army, both by its skill and valour in the field, and by the discipline which rendered it, to the inhabitants of the several countries where its operations were carried on, a protection from the violence of their own troops, has performed services that will not allow the language of gratitude and admiration to be suppressed or restrained (whatever be the temper of the

public mind) through a scrupulous dread lest the tribute due to the past should prove an injurious incentive for the future. Every man deserving the name of Briton adds his voice to the chorus which extols the exploits of his countrymen, with a consciousness, at times overpowering the effort, that they transcend all praise.—But this particular sentiment, thus irresistibly excited, is not sufficient. The nation would err grievously, if she suffered the abuse which other states have made of military power to prevent her from perceiving that no people ever was or can be, independent, free, or secure, much less great, in any sane application of the word, without a cultivation of military virtues. Nor let it be overlooked, that the benefits derivable from these sources are placed within the reach of Great Britain, under conditions peculiarly favourable. The same insular position which, by rendering territorial incorporation impossible, utterly precludes the desire of conquest under the most seductive shape it can assume, enables her to rely, for her defence against foreign foes, chiefly upon a species of armed force from which her own liberties have nothing to fear. Such are the privileges of her situation; and, by permitting, they invite her to give way to the courageous instincts of human nature, and to strengthen and refine them by culture.

But some have more than insinuated that a design exists to subvert the civil character of the English people by unconstitutional applications and unnecessary increase of military power. The advisers and abettors of such a design, were it possible that it should exist, would be guilty of the most heinous crime, which, upon this planet, can be committed. Trusting that this apprehension arises from the delusive influences of an honourable jealousy, let me hope that the martial qualities which I venerate will be fostered by adhering to those good old usages which experience has sanctioned; and by availing ourselves of new means of indisputable promise: particularly by applying, in its utmost possible extent, that system of tuition whose master-spring is a habit of gradually enlightened subordination;—by imparting knowledge, civil, moral, and religious, in such measure that the mind, among all classes of the community, may love, admire, and be prepared and accomplished to defend, that country under whose protection its faculties have been unfolded, and its riches acquired;—by just dealing towards all orders of the state, so that, no members of it being trampled upon, courage may everywhere continue to rest immovably upon its ancient English foundation, personal self-respect;—by adequate rewards, and permanent honours, conferred upon the deserving;—by encouraging athletic exercises and manly sports among the peasantry of the country;—and by especial care to provide and support institutions, in which, during a time of peace, a reasonable proportion of the youth of the country may be instructed in military science.

I have only to add, that I should feel little satisfaction in giving to the world these limited attempts to celebrate the virtues of my country, if I did not encourage a hope that a subject, which it has fallen within my province to treat only in the mass, will by other poets be illustrated in that detail which its importance calls for, and which will allow opportunities to give the merited applause to PERSONS as well as to THINGS.

The ode was published along with other pieces, now interspersed through this volume.

Page 253.

‘Discipline the rule whereof is passion.’

LORD BROOKE.

Page 255. Sonnet I.

If in this Sonnet I should seem to have borne a little too hard upon the personal appearance of the worthy

Poissards of Calais, let me take shelter under the authority of my lamented friend, the late Sir George Beaumont. He, a most accurate observer, used to say of them, that their features and countenances seemed to have conformed to those of the creatures they dealt in; at all events the resemblance was striking.

Page 255.

‘Bruges.’

This is not the first poetical tribute which in our times has been paid to this beautiful city. Mr. Southey, in the “Poet’s Pilgrimage” speaks of it in lines which I cannot deny myself the pleasure of connecting with my own.

‘Time hath not wronged her, nor hath ruin sought

Rudely her splendid structures to destroy,
Save in those recent days, with evil fraught,

When mutability, in drunken joy
Triumphant, and from all restraint released,
Let loose her fierce and many-headed beast.

But for the scars in that unhappy rage

Inflicted, firm she stands and undecayed;

Like our first Sires, a beautiful old age

Is hers in venerable years arrayed;

And yet, to her, benignant stars may bring,

What fate denies to man,—a second spring.

When I may read of tilts in days of old,

And tournaments graced by Chieftains of renown,

Fair dames, grave citizens, and warriors bold,

If fancy would portray some stately town,

Which for such pomp fit theatre should be,

Fair Bruges, I shall then remember thee.’

In this city are many vestiges of the splendour of the Burgundian Dukedom, and the long black mantle universally worn by the females is probably a remnant of the old Spanish connection, which, if I do not much deceive myself, is traceable in the grave deportment of its inhabitants. Bruges is comparatively little disturbed by that curious contest, or rather conflict, of Flemish with French propensities in matters of taste, so conspicuous through other parts of Flanders. The hotel to which we drove at Ghent furnished an odd instance. In the passages were paintings and statues, after the antique, of Hebe and Apollo; and in the garden, a little pond, about a yard and a half in diameter, with a weeping willow bending over it, and under the shade of that tree, in the centre of the pond a wooden painted statue of a Dutch or Flemish boor, looking ineffably tender upon his mistress, and embracing her. A living duck, tethered at the feet of the sculptured lovers, alternately tormented a miserable eel and itself with endeavours to escape from its bonds and prison. Had we chanced to spy the hostess of the hotel in this quaint rural retreat, the exhibition would have been complete. She was a true Flemish figure, in the dress of the days of Holbein; her symbol of office, a weighty bunch of keys, pendent from her portly waist. In Brussels, the modern taste in costume, architecture, &c., has got the mastery; in Ghent there is a struggle: but in Bruges old images are still paramount, and an air of monastic life among the quiet goings-on of a thinly-peopled city is inexpressibly soothing; a pensive grace seems to be cast over all, even the very children.—*Extract from Journal.*

Page 256.

‘Where unremitting frosts the rocky Crescent bleach.’

‘Let a wall of rocks be imagined from three to six hundred feet in height, and rising between France and Spain, so as physically to separate the two kingdoms—let us fancy this wall curved like a crescent, with its convexity towards France. Lastly, let us suppose, that

in the very middle of the wall, a breach of 300 feet wide has been beaten down by the famous *Roland*, and we may have a good idea of what the mountaineers call the 'BRECHE DE ROLAND.'—*Raymond's Pyrenees.*

Page 257.

'*Miserere Domine.*'

See the beautiful Song in Mr. Coleridge's Tragedy, "THE REMORSE." Why is the harp of Quantock silent?

Page 257.

'*Not, like his great Compeers, indignantly
Doth Danube spring to life !*'

Before this quarter of the Black Forest was inhabited, the source of the Danube might have suggested some of those sublime images which Armstrong has so finely described ; at present, the contrast is most striking. The Spring appears in a capacious stone Basin in front of a Ducal palace, with a pleasure-ground opposite ; then, passing under the pavement, takes the form of a little, clear, bright, black, vigorous rill, barely wide enough to tempt the agility of a child five years old to leap over it,—and entering the garden, it joins, after a course of a few hundred yards, a stream much more considerable than itself. The *copiousness* of the spring at *Doneschingen* must have procured for it the honour of being named the Source of the Danube.

Page 257.

"The Staub-bach" is a narrow Stream, which, after a long course on the heights, comes to the sharp edge of a somewhat overhanging precipice, overleaps it with a bound, and, after a fall of 930 feet, forms again a rivulet. The vocal powers of these musical Beggars may seem to be exaggerated ; but this wild and savage air was utterly unlike any sounds I had ever heard ; the notes reached me from a distance, and on what occasion they were sung I could not guess, only they seemed to belong, in some way or other, to the Waterfall—and reminded me of religious services chanted to Streams and Fountains in Pagan times. Mr. Southey has thus accurately characterised the peculiarity of this music : 'While we were at the Waterfall, some half-score peasants, chiefly women and girls, assembled just out of reach of the Spring, and set up—surely, the wildest chorus that ever was heard by human ears,—a song not of articulate sounds, but in which the voice was used as a mere instrument of music, more flexible than any which art could produce,—sweet, powerful, and thrilling beyond description.'—See Notes to "A Tale of Paraguay."

Page 259.

'*Engelberg.*'

The Convent whose site was pointed out, according to tradition, in this manner, is seated at its base. The architecture of the building is unimpressive, but the situation is worthy of the honour which the imagination of the mountaineers has conferred upon it.

Page 262.

'*Though searching damps and many an envious flaw
Have marred this Work ;*'

This picture of the Last Supper has not only been grievously injured by time, but the greatest part of it, if not the whole, is said to have been retouched, or painted over again. These niceties may be left to connoisseurs,—I speak of it as I felt. The copy exhibited in London some years ago, and the engraving by Merghen, are both admirable ; but in the original is a power which neither of those works has attained, or even approached.

Page 263.

'*Of figures human and divine,*'

The Statues ranged round the spire and along the roof of the Cathedral of Milan, have been found fault with by persons whose exclusive taste is unfortunate for themselves. It is true that the same expense and labour, judiciously directed to purposes more strictly architectural, might have much heightened the general effect of the building ; for, seen from the ground, the Statues appear diminutive. But the *coup-d'oeil*, from the best point of view, which is half way up the spire, must strike an unprejudiced person with admiration ; and surely the selection and arrangement of the Figures is exquisitely fitted to support the religion of the country in the imaginations and feelings of the spectator. It was with great pleasure that I saw, during the two ascents which we made, several children, of different ages, tripping up and down the slender spire, and pausing to look around them, with feelings much more animated than could have been derived from these or the finest works of art, if placed within easy reach.—Remember also that you have the Alps on one side, and on the other the Apennines, with the plain of Lombardy between !

Page 266.

'*Still, with those white-robed Shapes—a living Stream,
The glacier pillars join in solemn guise*'

This Procession is a part of the sacramental service performed once a month. In the valley of Engelberg we had the good fortune to be present at the *Grand Festival* of the Virgin—but the Procession on that day, though consisting of upwards of 1000 persons, assembled from all the branches of the sequestered valley, was much less striking (notwithstanding the sublimity of the surrounding scenery) : it wanted both the simplicity of the other and the accompaniment of the Glacier-columns, whose sisterly resemblance to the moving Figures gave it a most beautiful and solemn peculiarity.

Page 268. Sonnet xxxv.

Near the town of Boulogne, and overhanging the beach, are the remains of a tower which bears the name of Caligula, who here terminated his western expedition, of which these sea-shells were the boasted spoils. And at no great distance from these ruins, Buonaparte, standing upon a mound of earth, harangued his "Army of England," reminding them of the exploits of Caesar, and pointing towards the white cliffs, upon which their standards were to float. He recommended also a subscription to be raised among the Soldiery to erect on that ground, in memory of the foundation of the "Legion of Honour," a Column—which was not completed at the time we were there.

Page 268.

'*We mark majestic herds of cattle, free
To ruminate.*'

This is a most grateful sight for an Englishman returning to his native land. Every where one misses in the cultivated grounds abroad, the animated and soothing accompaniment of animals ranging and selecting their own food at will.

Page 268.

'*Far as St. Maurice, from yon eastern Forks,*'

LES FOURCHES, the point at which the two chains of mountains part, that inclose the Valais, which terminates at ST. MAURICE.

Page 269.

*'ye that occupy
Your Council-seats beneath the open sky,
On Sarnen's Mount,'*

Sarnen, one of the two capitals of the Canton of Unterwalden; the spot here alluded to is close to the town, and is called the Landenberg, from the tyrant of that name, whose château formerly stood there. On the 1st of January, 1308, the great day which the confederated Heroes had chosen for the deliverance of their country, all the castles of the Governors were taken by force or stratagem; and the Tyrants themselves conducted, with their creatures, to the frontiers, after having witnessed the destruction of their strong-holds. From that time the Landenberg has been the place where the Legislators of this division of the Canton assemble. The site, which is well described by Ebel, is one of the most beautiful in Switzerland.

Page 269.

'Calls me to pace her honoured Bridge—'

The bridges of Lucerne are roofed, and open at the sides, so that the passenger has, at the same time, the benefit of shade, and a view of the magnificent country. The pictures are attached to the rafters; those from Scripture History, on the Cathedral-bridge, amount, according to my notes, to 240. Subjects from the Old Testament face the passenger as he goes towards the Cathedral, and those from the New as he returns. The pictures on these bridges, as well as those in most other parts of Switzerland, are not to be spoken of as works of art; but they are instruments admirably answering the purpose for which they were designed.

Page 271.

*'Although 'tis fair,
'Twill be another Yarrow.'*

These words were quoted to me from "Yarrow Unvisited," by Sir Walter Scott, when I visited him at Abbotsford, a day or two before his departure for Italy: and the affecting condition in which he was when he looked upon Rome from the Janicular Mount, was reported to me by a lady who had the honour of conducting him thither.

Page 272.

'His sepulchral verse.'

If any English reader should be desirous of knowing how far I am justified in thus describing the epitaphs of Chiabrera, he will find translated specimens of them in this Volume, under the head of "Epitaphs and Elegiac Pieces."

Page 274.

'Aquadependente.'

It would be ungenerous not to advert to the religious movement that, since the composition of these verses in 1837, has made itself felt, more or less strongly, throughout the English Church;—a movement that takes, for its first principle, a devout deference to the voice of Christian antiquity. It is not my office to pass judgment on questions of theological detail; but my own repugnance to the spirit and system of Romanism has been so repeatedly and, I trust, feelingly expressed, that I shall not be suspected of a leaning that way, if I do not join in the grave charge, thrown out, perhaps in the heat of controversy, against the learned and pious men to whose labours I allude. I speak apart from controversy; but, with strong faith in the moral temper which would elevate the present by doing reverence to the past, I would draw cheerful auguries for the English Church from this movement, as likely to restore among us a

tone of piety more earnest and real, than that produced by the mere formalities of the understanding, refusing, in a degree, which I cannot but lament, that its own temper and judgment shall be controlled by those of antiquity.

Page 274.

Within a couple of hours of my arrival at Rome, I saw from Monte Pincio, the Pine tree as described in the sonnet; and, while expressing admiration at the beauty of its appearance, I was told by an acquaintance of my fellow-traveller, who happened to join us at the moment, that a price had been paid for it by the late Sir G. Beaumont, upon condition that the proprietor should not act upon his known intention of cutting it down.

Page 277.

'Camaldoli.'

This famous sanctuary was the original establishment of Saint Romualdo, (or Rumwald, as our ancestors saxonised the name) in the 11th century, the ground (campo) being given by a Count Maldo. The Camaldolensi, however, have spread wide as a branch of Benedictines, and may therefore be classed among the *gentlemen* of the monastic orders. The society comprehends two orders, monks and hermits; symbolised by their arms, two doves drinking out of the same cup. The monastery in which the monks here reside, is beautifully situated, but a large unattractive edifice, not unlike a factory. The hermitage is placed in a loftier and wilder region of the forest. It comprehends between 20 and 30 distinct residences, each including for its single hermit an inclosed piece of ground and three very small apartments. There are days of indulgence when the hermit may quit his cell, and when old age arrives, he descends from the mountain and takes his abode among the monks.

My companion who in the year 1831, fallen in with the monk, the subject of these two sonnets, who showed him his abode among the hermits. It is from him that I received the following particulars. He was then about 40 years of age, but his appearance was that of an older man. He had been a painter by profession, but on taking orders changed his name from Santi to Raffaello, perhaps with an unconscious reference as well to the great Sanzio d'Urbino as to the archangel. He assured my friend that he had been 13 years in the hermitage and had never known melancholy or ennui. In the little recess for study and prayer, there was a small collection of books. "I read only," said he, "books of asceticism and mystical theology." On being asked the names of the most famous mystics, he enumerated *Scaramelli, San Giovanni della Croce, St. Dionysius the Areopagite* (supposing the work which bears his name to be really his), and with peculiar emphasis *Ricardo di San Vittori*. The works of *Saint Theresa* are also in high repute among ascetics. These names may interest some of my readers.

We heard that Raffaello was then living in the convent; my friend sought in vain to renew his acquaintance with him. It was probably a day of seclusion. The reader will perceive that these sonnets were supposed to be written when he was a young man.

Page 277.

'What aim had they the pair of Monks?'

In justice to the Benedictines of Camaldoli, by whom strangers are so hospitably entertained, I feel obliged to notice, that I saw among them no other figures at all resembling, in size and complexion, the two Monks described in this Sonnet. What was their office, or the motive which brought them to this place of mortification, which they could not have approached without being carried in

this or some other way, a feeling of delicacy prevented me from inquiring. An account has before been given of the hermitage they were about to enter. It was visited by us towards the end of the month of May; yet snow was lying thick under the pine-trees, within a few yards of the gate.

Page 277.

'At Vallombrosa.'

The name of Milton is pleasingly connected with Vallombrosa in many ways. The pride with which the Monk, without any previous question from me, pointed out his residence, I shall not readily forget. It may be proper here to defend the Poet from a charge which has been brought against him, in respect to the passage in "Paradise Lost," where this place is mentioned. It is said, that he has erred in speaking of the trees there being deciduous, whereas they are, in fact, pines. The fault-finders are themselves mistaken; the natural woods of the region of Vallombrosa are deciduous, and spread to a great extent; those near the convent are, indeed, mostly pines; but they are avenues of trees planted within a few steps of each other, and thus composing large tracts of wood; plots of which are periodically cut down. The appearance of those narrow avenues, upon steep slopes open to the sky, on account of the height which the trees attain by being forced to grow upwards, is often very impressive. My guide, a boy of about fourteen years old, pointed this out to me in several places.

Page 280.

— *'More high the Dacian force,
To hoof and finger mailed!'* —

Here and infra, see Forsyth.

Page 286.

'The River Duddon.'

A Poet, whose works are not yet known as they deserve to be, thus enters upon his description of the "Ruins of Rome:—"

*'The rising Sun
Flames on the ruins in the purer air
Towering aloft;'*

and ends thus—

*'The setting Sun displays
His visible great round, between yon towers,
As through two shady cliffs.'*

Mr. Crowe, in his excellent loco-descriptive Poem, "Lewesdon Hill," is still more expeditious, finishing the whole on a May-morning, before breakfast.

*'To-morrow for severer thought, but now
To breakfast, and keep festival to-day.'*

No one believes, or is desired to believe, that those Poems were actually composed within such limits of time; nor was there any reason why a prose statement should acquaint the Reader with the plain fact, to the disturbance of poetic credibility. But, in the present case, I am compelled to mention, that the above series of Sonnets was the growth of many years;—the one which stands the 14th was the first produced; and others were added upon occasional visits to the Stream, or as recollections of the scenes upon its banks awakened a wish to describe them. In this manner I had proceeded insensibly, without perceiving that I was trespassing upon ground pre-occupied, at least as far as intention went, by Mr. Coleridge, who, more than twenty years ago, used to speak of writing a rural Poem, to be entitled "The Brook," of which he has given a sketch in a recent publication. But a particular subject, cannot, I think,

much interfere with a general one; and I have been further kept from encroaching upon any right Mr. C. may still wish to exercise, by the restriction which the frame of the Sonnet imposed upon me, narrowing unavoidably the range of thought, and precluding, though not without its advantages, many graces to which a freer movement of verse would naturally have led.

May I not venture, then, to hope, that, instead of being a hindrance, by anticipation of any part of the subject, these Sonnets may remind Mr. Coleridge of his own more comprehensive design, and induce him to fulfil it?—There is a sympathy in streams,—'one calleth to another;' and I would gladly believe, that "The Brook" will, ere long, murmur in concert with "The Duddon." But, asking pardon for this fancy, I need not scruple to say, that those verses must indeed be ill-fated which can enter upon such pleasant walks of nature, without receiving and giving inspiration. The power of waters over the minds of Poets has been acknowledged from the earliest ages;—through the 'Flumina amem sylvasque inglorius' of Virgil, down to the sublime apostrophe to the great rivers of the earth, by Armstrong, and the simple ejaculation of Burns, (chosen, if I recollect right, by Mr. Coleridge, as a motto for his embryo "Brook,")

*'The Muse nae Poet ever fand her,
Till by himsel' he learned to wander,
Adown some trotting burn's meander,
AND NA' THINK LANG.'*

Page 286.

*'There bloomed the strawberry of the wilderness,
The trembling eyebright showed her sapphire blue.'*

These two lines are in a great measure taken from "The Beauties of Spring, a Juvenile Poem," by the Rev. Joseph Sympton. He was a native of Cumberland, and was educated in the vale of Grasmere, and at Hawkshead school: his poems are little known, but they contain passages of splendid description; and the versification of his "Vision of Alfred" is harmonious and animated. In describing the motions of the Sylphs, that constitute the strange machinery of his Poem, he uses the following illustrative simile:—

— *'Glancing from their plumes
A changeful light the azure vault illumines.
Less varying hues beneath the Pole adorn
The streamy glories of the Boreal morn,
That wavering to and fro their radiance shed
On Bothnia's gulf with glassy ice o'erspread,
Where the lone native, as he homeward glides,
On polished sandals o'er the imprisoned tides,
And still the balance of his frame preserves,
Wheeled on alternate foot in lengthening curves,
Sees at a glance, above him and below,
Two rival heavens with equal splendour glow.
Sphered in the centre of the world he seems;
For all around with soft effulgence gleams;
Stars, moons, and meteors, ray opposed to ray,
And solemn midnight pours the blaze of day.'*

He was a man of ardent feeling, and his faculties of mind, particularly his memory, were extraordinary. Brief notices of his life ought to find a place in the History of Westmoreland.

Page 289. Sonnets xvii. & xviii.

The EAGLE requires a large domain for its support: but several pairs, not many years ago, were constantly resident in this country, building their nests in the steep of Borrowdale, Wastdale, Ennerdale, and on the eastern side of Helvellyn. Often have I heard anglers speak of the grandeur of their appearance, as they hovered over Red Tarn, in one of the coves of this mountain. The

bird frequently returns, but is always destroyed. Not long since, one visited Rydal lake, and remained some hours near its banks: the consternation which it occasioned among the different species of fowl, particularly the herons, was expressed by loud screams. The horse also is naturally afraid of the eagle.—There were several Roman stations among these mountains; the most considerable seems to have been in a meadow at the head of Windermere, established, undoubtedly, as a check over the Passes of Kirkstone, Dunmail-raise, and of Hardknot and Wrynose. On the margin of Rydal lake, a coin of Trajan was discovered very lately.—The ROMAN FORT here alluded to, called by the country people "*Hardknot Castle*," is most impressively situated half-way down the hill on the right of the road that descends from Hardknot into Eskdale. It has escaped the notice of most antiquarians, and is but slightly mentioned by Lysons.—The DRUIDICAL CIRCLE is about half a mile to the left of the road ascending Stone-side from the vale of Duddon: the country people call it "*Sunken Church*."

The reader who may have been interested in the foregoing Sonnets, (which together may be considered as a Poem,) will not be displeased to find in this place a prose account of the Duddon, extracted from Green's comprehensive *Guide to the Lakes*, lately published. 'The road leading from Coniston to Broughton is over high ground, and commands a view of the River Duddon; which, at high water, is a grand sight, having the beautiful and fertile lands of Lancashire and Cumberland stretching each way from its margin. In this extensive view, the face of nature is displayed in a wonderful variety of hill and dale; wooded grounds and buildings; amongst the latter Broughton Tower, seated on the crown of a hill, rising elegantly from the valley, is an object of extraordinary interest. Fertility on each side is gradually diminished, and lost in the superior heights of Blackcomb, in Cumberland, and the high lands between Kirkby and Ulverstone.

'The road from Broughton to Seathwaite is on the banks of the Duddon, and on its Lancashire side it is of various elevations. The river is an amusing companion, one while brawling and tumbling over rocky precipices, until the agitated water becomes again calm by arriving at a smoother and less precipitous bed, but its course is soon again ruffled, and the current thrown into every variety of foam which the rocky channel of a river can give to water.'—*Vide Green's Guide to the Lakes*, vol. i. pp. 98—100.

After all, the traveller would be most gratified who should approach this beautiful Stream, neither at its source, as is done in the Sonnets, nor from its termination; but from Coniston over Walna Scar; first descending into a little circular valley, a collateral compartment of the long winding vale through which flows the Duddon. This recess, towards the close of September, when the after-grass of the meadows is still of a fresh green, with the leaves of many of the trees faded, but perhaps none fallen, is truly enchanting. At a point elevated enough to show the various objects in the valley, and not so high as to diminish their importance, the stranger will instinctively halt. On the foreground, a little below the most favourable station, a rude foot-bridge is thrown over the bed of the noisy brook foaming by the way-side. Russet and craggy hills, of bold and varied outline, surround the level valley, which is besprinkled with grey rocks plumed with birch trees. A few homesteads are interspersed, in some places peeping out from among the rocks like hermitages, whose site has been chosen for the benefit of sunshine as well as shelter; in other instances, the dwelling-house, barn, and byre, compose together a cruciform structure, which, with its embowering trees, and the ivy clothing part of the walls and roof like a fleece, call to mind the remains of an ancient abbey. Time, in most cases, and nature every where, have given a sanctity to the humble works of

man, that are scattered over this peaceful retirement. Hence a harmony of tone and colour, a consummation and perfection of beauty, which would have been marred had aim or purpose interfered with the course of convenience, utility, or necessity. This unvisited region stands in no need of the veil of twilight to soften or disguise its features. As it glistens in the morning sunshine, it would fill the spectator's heart with gladness. Looking from our chosen station, he would feel an impatience to rove among its pathways, to be greeted by the milkmaid, to wander from house to house, exchanging 'good-morrows' as he passed the open doors; but, at evening, when the sun is set, and a pearly light gleams from the western quarter of the sky, with an answering light from the smooth surface of the meadows; when the trees are dusky, but each kind still distinguishable; when the cool air has condensed the blue smoke rising from the cottage chimneys; when the dark mossy stones seem to sleep in the bed of the foaming brook; then, he would be unwilling to move forward, not less from a reluctance to relinquish what he beholds, than from an apprehension of disturbing, by his approach, the quietness beneath him. Issuing from the plain of this valley, the brook descends in a rapid torrent passing by the church-yard of Seathwaite. The traveller is thus conducted at once into the midst of the wild and beautiful scenery which gave occasion to the Sonnets from the 14th to the 20th inclusive. From the point where the Seathwaite brook joins the Duddon, is a view upwards, into the pass through which the river makes its way into the plain of Donnerdale. The perpendicular rock on the right bears the ancient British name of THE PEN; the one opposite is called WALLA-BARROW CRAG, a name that occurs in other places to designate rocks of the same character. The chaotic aspect of the scene is well marked by the expression of a stranger, who strolled out while dinner was preparing, and at his return, being asked by his host, "What way he had been wandering?" replied, "As far as it is finished!"

The bed of the Duddon is here strewn with large fragments of rocks fallen from aloft; which, as Mr. Green truly says, 'are happily adapted to the many-shaped waterfalls,' (or rather waterbreaks, for none of them are high,) 'displayed in the short space of half a mile.' That there is some hazard in frequenting these desolate places, I myself have had proof; for one night an immense mass of rock fell upon the very spot where, with a friend, I had lingered the day before. 'The concussion,' says Mr. Green, speaking of the event, (for he also, in the practice of his art, on that day sat exposed for a still longer time to the same peril), 'was heard, not without alarm by the neighbouring shepherds.' But to return to Seathwaite Church-yard: it contains the following inscription:—

'In memory of the Reverend Robert Walker, who died the 25th of June, 1802, in the 93d year of his age, and 67th of his curacy at Seathwaite.

'Also, of Anne his wife, who died the 28th of January, in the 93d year of her age.'

In the parish-register of Seathwaite Chapel, is this notice:

'Buried, June 28th, the Rev. Robert Walker. He was curate of Seathwaite sixty-six years. He was a man singular for his temperance, industry, and integrity.'

This individual is the Pastor alluded to, in the eighteenth Sonnet, as a worthy compeer of the country parson of Chaucer, &c. In the seventh book of the *Excursion*, an abstract of his character is given, beginning—

'A Priest abides before whose life such doubts
Fall to the ground;—'

and some account of his life, for it is worthy of being recorded, will not be out of place here.

MEMOIR OF THE REV. ROBERT WALKER.

In the year 1709, Robert Walker was born at Under-crag, in Seathwaite; he was the youngest of twelve children. His eldest brother, who inherited the small family estate, died at Under-crag, aged ninety-four, being twenty-four years older than the subject of this Memoir, who was born of the same mother. Robert was a sickly infant; and, through his boyhood and youth, continuing to be of delicate frame and tender health, it was deemed best, according to the country phrase, to *breed him a scholar*; for it was not likely that he would be able to earn a livelihood by bodily labour. At that period few of these dales were furnished with school-houses; the children being taught to read and write in the chapel; and in the same consecrated building, where he officiated for so many years both as preacher and schoolmaster, he himself received the rudiments of his education. In his youth he became schoolmaster at Loweswater; not being called upon, probably, in that situation to teach more than reading, writing, and arithmetic. But, by the assistance of a 'Gentleman' in the neighbourhood, he acquired, at leisure hours, a knowledge of the classics, and became qualified for taking holy orders. Upon his ordination, he had the offer of two curacies: the one, Torver, in the vale of Coniston,—the other, Seathwaite, in his native vale. The value of each was the same, *viz.*, five pounds *per annum*: but the cure of Seathwaite having a cottage attached to it, as he wished to marry, he chose it in preference. The young person on whom his affections were fixed, though in the condition of a domestic servant, had given promise, by her serious and modest deportment, and by her virtuous dispositions, that she was worthy to become the helpmate of a man entering upon a plan of life such as he had marked out for himself. By her frugality she had stored up a small sum of money, with which they began housekeeping. In 1735 or 1736, he entered upon his curacy; and, nineteen years afterwards, his situation is thus described, in some letters to be found in the Annual Register for 1760, from which the following is extracted:—

'To Mr. ———.

'SIR,

'Coniston, July 26, 1754.

'I was the other day upon a party of pleasure, about five or six miles from this place, where I met with a very striking object, and of a nature not very common. Going into a clergyman's house (of whom I had frequently heard), I found him sitting at the head of a long square table, such as is commonly used in this country by the lower class of people, dressed in a coarse blue frock, trimmed with black horn buttons; a checked shirt, a leathern strap about his neck for a stock, a coarse apron, and a pair of great wooden-soled shoes plated with iron to preserve them (what we call clogs in these parts), with a child upon his knee, eating his breakfast; his wife, and the remainder of his children, were some of them employed in waiting upon each other, the rest in teasing and spinning wool, at which trade he is a great proficient; and moreover, when it is made ready for sale, will lay it, by sixteen or thirty-two pounds' weight, upon his back, and on foot, seven or eight miles, will carry it to the market, even in the depth of winter. I was not much surprised at all this, as you may possibly be, having heard a great deal of it related before. But I must confess myself astonished with the alacrity and the good humour that appeared both in the clergyman and his wife, and more so at the sense and ingenuity of the clergyman himself.' * * *

Then follows a letter from another person, dated 1755, from which an extract shall be given.

'By his frugality and good management, he keeps the wolf from the door, as we say; and if he advances a little in the world, it is owing more to his own care, than

to anything else he has to rely upon. I don't find his inclination is running after further preferment. He is settled among the people, that are happy among themselves; and lives in the greatest unanimity and friendship with them; and, I believe, the minister and people are exceedingly satisfied with each other; and indeed how should they be dissatisfied when they have a person of so much worth and probity for their pastor? A man who, for his candour and meekness, his sober, chaste, and virtuous conversation, his soundness in principle and practice, is an ornament to his profession, and an honour to the country he is in; and bear with me if I say, the plainness of his dress, the sanctity of his manners, the simplicity of his doctrine, and the vehemence of his expression, have a sort of resemblance to the pure practice of primitive Christianity.'

We will now give his own account of himself, to be found in the same place.

FROM THE REV. ROBERT WALKER.

'SIR,—Yours of the 26th instant was communicated to me by Mr. C——, and I should have returned an immediate answer, but the hand of Providence, then laying heavy upon an amiable pledge of conjugal endearment, hath since taken from me a promising girl, which the disconsolate mother too pensively laments the loss of; though we have yet eight living, all healthful, hopeful children, whose names and ages are as follows:—Zaccheus, aged almost eighteen years; Elizabeth, sixteen years and ten months; Mary, fifteen; Moses, thirteen years and three months; Sarah, ten years and three months; Mabel, eight years and three months; William Tyson, three years and eight months; and Anne Esther, one year and three months; besides Anne, who died two years and six months ago, and was then aged between nine and ten; and Eleanor, who died the 23d inst., January, aged six years and ten months. Zaccheus, the eldest child, is now learning the trade of tanner, and has two years and a half of his apprenticeship to serve. The annual income of my chapel at present, as near as I can compute it, may amount to about 17*l.*, of which is paid in cash, *viz.*, 5*l.* from the bounty of Queen Anne, and 5*l.* from W. P., Esq., of P——, out of the annual rents, he being lord of the manor, and 5*l.* from the several inhabitants of L——, settled upon the tenements as a rent-charge; the house and gardens I value at 4*l.* yearly, and not worth more; and I believe the surplice fees and voluntary contributions, one year with another, may be worth 3*l.*; but as the inhabitants are few in number, and the fees very low, this last-mentioned sum consists merely in free-will offerings.

'I am situated greatly to my satisfaction with regard to the conduct and behaviour of my auditory, who not only live in the happy ignorance of the follies and vices of the age, but in mutual peace and goodwill with one another, and are seemingly (I hope really too) sincere Christians, and sound members of the established church, not one dissenter of any denomination being amongst them all. I got to the value of 40*l.* for my wife's fortune, but had no real estate of my own, being the youngest son of twelve children, born of obscure parents; and, though my income has been but small, and my family large, yet, by a providential blessing upon my own diligent endeavours, the kindness of friends, and a cheap country to live in, we have always had the necessities of life. By what I have written (which is a true and exact account, to the best of my knowledge,) I hope you will not think your favour to me, out of the late worthy Dr. Stratford's effects, quite misbestowed, for which I must ever gratefully own myself,

'SIR,

'Your much obliged and most obedient humble Servant,

'R. W., Curate of S——.

'To Mr. C., of Lancaster.'

About the time when this letter was written, the Bishop of Chester recommended the scheme of joining the curacy of Ulpha to the contiguous one of Seathwaite, and the nomination was offered to Mr. Walker; but an unexpected difficulty arising, Mr. W., in a letter to the Bishop, (a copy of which, in his own beautiful handwriting, now lies before me,) thus expresses himself. 'If he,' meaning the person in whom the difficulty originated, 'had suggested any such objection before, I should utterly have declined any attempt to the curacy of Ulpha: indeed, I was always apprehensive it might be disagreeable to my auditory at Seathwaite, as they have been always accustomed to double duty, and the inhabitants of Ulpha despair of being able to support a schoolmaster who is not curate there also; which suppressed all thoughts in me of serving them both.' And in a second letter to the Bishop he writes:—

'MY LORD,—I have the favour of yours of the 1st instant, and am exceedingly obliged on account of the Ulpha affair: if that curacy should lapse into your Lordship's hands, I would beg leave rather to decline than embrace it; for the chapels of Seathwaite and Ulpha, annexed together, would be apt to cause a general discontent among the inhabitants of both places; by either thinking themselves slighted, being only served alternately, or neglected in the duty, or attributing it to covetousness in me; all which occasions of murmuring I would willingly avoid.' And in concluding his former letter, he expresses a similar sentiment upon the same occasion, 'desiring, if it be possible, however, as much as in me lieth, to live peaceably with all men.'

The year following, the curacy of Seathwaite was again augmented; and, to effect this augmentation, fifty pounds had been advanced by himself; and, in 1760, lands were purchased with eight hundred pounds. Scanty as was his income, the frequent offer of much better benefices could not tempt Mr. W. to quit a situation where he had been so long happy, with a consciousness of being useful. Among his papers I find the following copy of a letter, dated 1775, twenty years after his refusal of the curacy of Ulpha, which will show what exertions had been made for one of his sons.

'MAY IT PLEASE YOUR GRACE,

'Our remote situation here makes it difficult to get the necessary information for transacting business regularly; such is the reason of my giving your Grace the present trouble.

'The bearer (my son) is desirous of offering himself candidate for deacon's orders at your Grace's ensuing ordination; the first, on the 25th instant, so that his papers could not be transmitted in due time. As he is now fully at age, and I have afforded him education to the utmost of my ability, it would give me great satisfaction (if your Grace would take him, and find him qualified) to have him ordained. His constitution has been tender for some years; he entered the college of Dublin, but his health would not permit him to continue there, or I would have supported him much longer. He has been with me at home above a year, in which time he has gained great strength of body, sufficient, I hope, to enable him for performing the function. Divine Providence, assisted by liberal benefactors, has blest my endeavours, from a small income, to rear a numerous family; and as my time of life renders me now unfit for much future expectancy from this world, I should be glad to see my son settled in a promising way to acquire an honest livelihood for himself. His behaviour, so far in life, has been irreproachable; and I hope he will not degenerate, in principles or practice, from the precepts and pattern of an indulgent parent. Your Grace's favourable reception of this, from a distant corner of the diocese, and an obscure hand, will excite filial gratitude,

and a due use shall be made of the obligation vouchsafed thereby to

'Your Grace's very dutiful and most obedient

'Son and Servant,

'ROBERT WALKER.'

The same man, who was thus liberal in the education of his numerous family, was even munificent in hospitality as a parish priest. Every Sunday, were served, upon the long table, at which he has been described sitting with a child upon his knee, messes of broth, for the refreshment of those of his congregation who came from a distance, and usually took their seats as parts of his own household. It seems scarcely possible that this custom could have commenced before the augmentation of his cure; and what would to many have been a high price of self-denial, was paid, by the pastor and his family, for this gratification; as the treat could only be provided by dressing at one time the whole, perhaps, of their weekly allowance of fresh animal food; consequently, for a succession of days, the table was covered with cold victuals only. His generosity in old age may be still further illustrated by a little circumstance relating to an orphan grandson, then ten years of age, which I find in a copy of a letter to one of his sons; he requests that half a guinea may be left for 'little Robert's pocket-money,' who was then at school: intrusting it to the care of a lady, who, as he says, 'may sometimes frustrate his squandering it away foolishly,' and promising to send him an equal allowance annually for the same purpose. The conclusion of the same letter is so characteristic, that I cannot forbear to transcribe it. 'We,' meaning his wife and himself, 'are in our wonted state of health, allowing for the hasty strides of old age knocking daily at our door, and threateningly telling us, we are not only mortal, but must expect ere long to take our leave of our ancient cottage, and lie down in our last dormitory. Pray pardon my neglect to answer yours: let us hear sooner from you, to augment the mirth of the Christmas holidays. Wishing you all the pleasures of the approaching season, I am, dear Son, with lasting sincerity, yours affectionately,

'ROBERT WALKER.'

He loved old customs and old usages, and in some instances stuck to them to his own loss; for, having had a sum of money lodged in the hands of a neighbouring tradesman, when long course of time had raised the rate of interest, and more was offered, he refused to accept it; an act not difficult to one, who, while he was drawing seventeen pounds a year from his curacy, declined, as we have seen, to add the profits of another small benefice to his own, lest he should be suspected of cupidity.—From this vice he was utterly free; he made no charge for teaching school; such as could afford to pay, gave him what they pleased. When very young, having kept a diary of his expenses, however trifling, the large amount, at the end of the year, surprised him; and from that time the rule of his life was to be economical, not avaricious. At his decease he left behind him no less a sum than 2000*l.*; and such a sense of his various excellences was prevalent in the country, that the epithet of WONDERFUL is to this day attached to his name.

There is in the above sketch something so extraordinary as to require further explanatory details.—And to begin with his industry; eight hours in each day, during five days in the week, and half of Saturday, except when the labours of husbandry were urgent, he was occupied in teaching. His seat was within the rails of the altar; the communion table was his desk; and, like Shenstone's schoolmistress, the master employed himself at the spinning-wheel, while the children were repeating their lessons by his side. Every evening, after school hours, if not more profitably engaged, he continued the same kind of labour, exchanging, for the benefit of exercise, the small wheel, at which he had sate, for the large

one on which wool is spun, the spinner stepping to and fro. Thus, was the wheel constantly in readiness to prevent the waste of a moment's time. Nor was his industry with the pen, when occasion called for it, less eager. Intrusted with extensive management of public and private affairs, he acted, in his rustic neighbourhood, as scrivener, writing out petitions, deeds of conveyance, wills, covenants, &c., with pecuniary gain to himself, and to the great benefit of his employers. These labours (at all times considerable) at one period of the year, viz., between Christmas and Candlemas, when money transactions are settled in this country, were often so intense, that he passed great part of the night, and sometimes whole nights, at his desk. His garden also was tilled by his own hand; he had a right of pasturage upon the mountains for a few sheep and a couple of cows, which required his attendance; with this pastoral occupation, he joined the labours of husbandry upon a small scale, renting two or three acres in addition to his own less than one acre of glebe; and the humblest drudgery which the cultivation of these fields required was performed by himself.

He also assisted his neighbours in haymaking and shearing their flocks, and in the performance of this latter service he was eminently dexterous. They, in their turn, complimented him with the present of a haycock, or a fleece; less as a recompence for this particular service than as a general acknowledgment. The Sabbath was in a strict sense kept holy; the Sunday evenings being devoted to reading the Scripture and family prayer. The principal festivals appointed by the Church were also duly observed; but through every other day in the week, through every week in the year, he was incessantly occupied in work of hand or mind; not allowing a moment for recreation, except upon a Saturday afternoon, when he indulged himself with a Newspaper, or sometimes with a Magazine. The frugality and temperance established in his house, were as admirable as the industry. Nothing to which the name of luxury could be given was there known; in the latter part of his life, indeed, when tea had been brought into almost general use, it was provided for visitors, and for such of his own family as returned occasionally to his roof, and had been accustomed to this refreshment elsewhere; but neither he nor his wife ever partook of it. The raiment worn by his family was comely and decent, but as simple as their diet; the home-spun materials were made up into apparel by their own hands. At the time of the decease of this thrifty pair, their cottage contained a large store of webs of woollen and linen cloth, woven from thread of their own spinning. And it is remarkable that the pew in the chapel in which the family used to sit, remains neatly lined with woollen cloth spun by the pastor's own hands. It is the only pew in the chapel so distinguished; and I know of no other instance of his conformity to the delicate accommodations of modern times. The fuel of the house, like that of their neighbours, consisted of peat, procured from the mosses by their own labour. The lights by which, in the winter evenings, their work was performed, were of their own manufacture, such as still continue to be used in these cottages; they are made of the pith of rushes dipped in an unctuous substance that the house affords. *White* candles, as tallow candles are here called, were reserved to honour the Christmas festivals, and were perhaps produced upon no other occasions. Once a month, during the proper season, a sheep was drawn from their small mountain flock, and killed for the use of the family; and a cow, towards the close of the year, was salted and dried for winter provision: the hide was tanned to furnish them with shoes.—By these various resources, this venerable clergyman reared a numerous family, not only preserving them, as he affectingly says, 'from wanting the necessities of life;' but affording them an unstinted education, and the means of raising

themselves in society. In this they were eminently assisted by the effects of their father's example, his precepts, and injunctions: he was aware that truth-speaking, as a moral virtue, is best secured by inculcating attention to accuracy of report even on trivial occasions; and so rigid were the rules of honesty by which he endeavoured to bring up his family, that if one of them had chanced to find in the lanes or fields anything of the least use or value without being able to ascertain to whom it belonged, he always insisted upon the child's carrying it back to the place from which it had been brought.

No one it might be thought could, as has been described, convert his body into a machine, as it were, of industry for the humblest uses, and keep his thoughts so frequently bent upon secular concerns, without grievous injury to the more precious parts of his nature. How could the powers of intellect thrive, or its graces be displayed, in the midst of circumstances apparently so unfavourable, and where, to the direct cultivation of the mind, so small a portion of time was allotted? But, in this extraordinary man, things in their nature adverse were reconciled. His conversation was remarkable, not only for being chaste and pure, but for the degree in which it was fervent and eloquent; his written style was correct, simple, and animated. Nor did his *affections* suffer more than his intellect; he was tenderly alive to all the duties of his pastoral office: the poor and needy 'he never sent empty away,'—the stranger was fed and refreshed in passing that unfrequented vale—the sick were visited; and the feelings of humanity found further exercise among the distresses and embarrassments in the worldly estate of his neighbours, with which his talents for business made him acquainted; and the disinterestedness, impartiality, and uprightness which he maintained in the management of all affairs confided to him, were virtues seldom separated in his own conscience from religious obligation. Nor could such conduct fail to remind those who witnessed it of a spirit nobler than law or custom: they felt convictions which, but for such intercourse, could not have been afforded, that, as in the practice of their pastor, there was no guile, so in his faith there was nothing hollow; and we are warranted in believing, that upon these occasions, selfishness, obstinacy, and discord would often give way before the breathings of his good-will and saintly integrity. It may be presumed also—while his humble congregation were listening to the moral precepts which he delivered from the pulpit, and to the Christian exhortations that they should love their neighbours as themselves, and do as they would be done unto—that peculiar efficacy was given to the preacher's labours by recollections in the minds of his congregation, that they were called upon to do no more than his own actions were daily setting before their eyes.

The afternoon service in the chapel was less numerously attended than that of the morning, but by a more serious auditory; the lesson from the New Testament, on those occasions, was accompanied by Burkit's Commentaries. These lessons he read with impassioned emphasis, frequently drawing tears from his hearers, and leaving a lasting impression upon their minds. His devotional feelings and the powers of his own mind were further exercised, along with those of his family, in perusing the Scriptures: not only on the Sunday evenings, but on every other evening, while the rest of the household were at work, some one of the children, and in her turn the servant, for the sake of practice in reading, or for instruction, read the Bible aloud; and in this manner the whole was repeatedly gone through. That no common importance was attached to the observance of religious ordinances by his family, appears from the following memorandum by one of his descendants, which I am tempted to insert at length, as it is characteristic, and somewhat curious. 'There is a small chapel in the county palatine of Lancaster, where

a certain clergyman has regularly officiated above sixty years, and a few months ago administered the sacrament of the Lord's Supper in the same, to a decent number of devout communicants. After the clergyman had received himself, the first company out of the assembly who approached the altar, and knelt down to be partakers of the sacred elements, consisted of the parson's wife; to whom he had been married upwards of sixty years; one son and his wife; four daughters, each with her husband; whose ages, all added together, amount to above 714 years. The several and respective distances from the place of each of their abodes, to the chapel where they all communicated, will measure more than 1000 English miles. Though the narration will appear surprising, it is without doubt a fact that the same persons, exactly four years before, met at the same place, and all joined in performance of the same venerable duty.'

He was indeed most zealously attached to the doctrine and frame of the Established Church. We have seen him congratulating himself that he had no dissenters in his cure of any denomination. Some allowance must be made for the state of opinion when his first religious impressions were received, before the reader will acquit him of bigotry, when I mention, that at the time of the augmentation of the cure, he refused to invest part of the money in the purchase of an estate offered to him upon advantageous terms, because the proprietor was a Quaker;—whether from scrupulous apprehension that a blessing would not attend a contract framed for the benefit of the church between persons not in religious sympathy with each other; or, as a seeker of peace, he was afraid of the uncompromising disposition which at one time was too frequently conspicuous in that sect. Of this an instance had fallen under his own notice; for, while he taught school at Loweswater, certain persons of that denomination had refused to pay annual interest due under the title of Church-stock*; a great hardship upon the incumbent, for the curacy of Loweswater was then scarcely less poor than that of Seathwaite. To what degree this prejudice of his was blameable need not be determined;—certain it is, that he was not only desirous, as he himself says, to live in peace, but in love, with all men. He was placable, and charitable in his judgments; and, however correct in conduct and rigorous to himself, he was ever ready to forgive the trespasses of others, and to soften the censure that was cast upon their frailties.—It would be unpardonable to omit that, in the maintenance of his virtues, he received due support from the partner of his long life. She was equally strict, in attending to her share of their joint cares, nor less diligent in her appropriate occupations. A person who had been some time their servant in the latter part of their lives, concluded the panegyric of her mistress by saying to me, "She was no less excellent than her husband; she was good to the poor; she was good to every thing!" He survived for a short time this virtuous companion. When she died, he ordered that her body should be borne to the grave by three of her daughters and one granddaughter; and, when the corpse was lifted from the threshold, he insisted upon lending his aid, and feeling about, for he was then almost blind, took hold of a napkin fixed to the coffin; and, as a bearer of the body, entered the chapel, a few steps from the lowly parsonage.

What a contrast does the life of this obscurely-seated, and, in point of worldly wealth, poorly-repaid Churchman, present to that of a Cardinal Wolsey!

'O 'tis a burthen, Cromwell, 'tis a burthen
Too heavy for a man who hopes for heaven!'

* Mr. Walker's charity being of that kind which 'seeketh not her own,' he would rather forego his rights than distract for dues which the parties liable refused, as a point of conscience, to pay.

We have been dwelling upon images of peace in the moral world, that have brought us again to the quiet enclosure of consecrated ground, in which this venerable pair lie interred. The sounding brook, that rolls close by the church-yard, without disturbing feeling or meditation, is now unfortunately laid bare; but not long ago it participated, with the chapel, the shade of some stately ash-trees, which will not spring again. While the spectator from this spot is looking round upon the girdle of stony mountains that encompasses the vale,—masses of rock, out of which monuments for all men that ever existed might have been hewn—it would surprise him to be told, as with truth he might be, that the plain blue slab dedicated to the memory of this aged pair is a production of a quarry in North Wales. It was sent as a mark of respect by one of their descendants from the vale of Festiniog, a region almost as beautiful as that in which it now lies!

Upon the Seathwaite Brook, at a small distance from the parsonage, has been erected a mill for spinning yarn; it is a mean and disagreeable object, though not unimportant to the spectator, as calling to mind the momentous changes wrought by such inventions in the frame of society—changes which have proved especially unfavourable to these mountain solitudes. So much had been effected by those new powers, before the subject of the preceding biographical sketch closed his life, that their operation could not escape his notice, and doubtless excited touching reflections upon the comparatively insignificant results of his own manual industry. But Robert Walker was not a man of times and circumstances: had he lived at a later period, the principle of duty would have produced application as unremitting; the same energy of character would have been displayed, though in many instances with widely-different effects.

With pleasure I annex, as illustrative and confirmatory of the above account, extracts from a paper in the Christian Remembrancer, October, 1819: it bears an assumed signature, but is known to be the work of the Rev. Robert Bamford, vicar of Bishopton, in the county of Durham; a great-grandson of Mr. Walker, whose worth it commemorates, by a record not the less valuable for being written in very early youth.

'His house was a nursery of virtue. All the inmates were industrious, and cleanly, and happy. Sobriety, neatness, quietness, characterised the whole family. No railings, no idleness, no indulgence of passion were permitted. Every child, however young, had its appointed engagements; every hand was busy. Knitting, spinning, reading, writing, mending clothes, making shoes, were by the different children constantly performing. The father himself sitting amongst them, and guiding their thoughts, was engaged in the same occupations. * * *

'He sat up late, and rose early; when the family were at rest, he retired to a little room which he had built on the roof of his house. He had slated it, and fitted it up with shelves for his books, his stock of cloth, wearing apparel, and his utensils. There many a cold winter's night, without fire, while the roof was glazed with ice, did he remain reading or writing till the day dawned. He taught the children in the chapel, for there was no schoolhouse. Yet in that cold, damp place he never had a fire. He used to send the children in parties either to his own fire at home, or make them run up the mountain side.

* * * * *

'It may be further mentioned, that he was a passionate admirer of Nature; she was his mother, and he was a dutiful child. While engaged on the mountains, it was his greatest pleasure to view the rising sun; and in tranquil evenings, as it slid behind the hills, he blessed its departure. He was skilled in fossils and plants; a constant observer of the stars and winds: the atmosphere was his delight. He made many experiments on its nature and properties. In summer he used to

gather a multitude of flies and insects, and, by his entertaining description, amuse and instruct his children. They shared all his daily employments, and derived many sentiments of love and benevolence from his observations on the works and productions of nature. Whether they were following him in the field, or surrounding him in school, he took every opportunity of storing their minds with useful information.—Nor was the circle of his influence confined to Seathwaite. Many a distant mother has told her child of Mr. Walker, and begged him to be as good a man.

* * * * *
 'Once, when I was very young, I had the pleasure of seeing and hearing that venerable old man in his 90th year, and even then, the calmness, the force, the perspicuity of his sermon, sanctified and adorned by the wisdom of grey hairs, and the authority of virtue, had such an effect upon my mind, that I never see a hoary-headed clergyman, without thinking of Mr. Walker * * *. He allowed no dissenter or methodist to interfere in the instruction of the souls committed to his cure: and so successful were his exertions, that he had not one dissenter of any denomination whatever in the whole parish.—Though he avoided all religious controversies, yet when age had silvered his head, and virtuous piety had secured to his appearance reverence and silent honour, no one, however determined in his hatred of apostolic descent, could have listened to his discourse on ecclesiastical history and ancient times, without thinking, that one of the beloved apostles had returned to mortality, and in that vale of peace had come to exemplify the beauty of holiness in the life and character of Mr. Walker.

* * * * *
 'Until the sickness of his wife, a few months previous to her death, his health and spirits and faculties were unimpaired. But this misfortune gave him such a shock, that his constitution gradually decayed. His senses, except sight, still preserved their powers. He never preached with steadiness after his wife's death. His voice faltered: he always looked at the seat she had used. He could not pass her tomb without tears. He became, when alone, sad and melancholy, though still among his friends kind and good-humoured. He went to bed about 12 o'clock the night before his death. As his custom was, he went, tottering and leaning upon his daughter's arm, to examine the heavens, and meditate a few moments in the open air. "How clear the moon shines to-night!" He said these words, sighed, and laid down. At six next morning he was found a corpse. Many a tear, and many a heavy heart, and many a grateful blessing followed him to the grave.'

Having mentioned in this narrative the vale of Loweswater as a place where Mr. Walker taught school, I will add a few memoranda from its parish register, respecting a person apparently of desires as moderate, with whom he must have been intimate during his residence there.

'Let him that would, ascend the tottering seat
 Of courtly grandeur, and become as great
 As are his mounting wishes; but for me,
 Let sweet repose and rest my portion be.
 HENRY FOREST, Curaté.'

'Honour, the idol which the most adore,
 Receives no homage from my knee;
 Content in privacy I value more
 Than all uneasy dignity.'

'Henry Forest came to Loweswater, 1708, being 25 years of age.'

'This curacy was twice augmented by Queen Anne's Bounty. The first payment, with great difficulty, was paid to Mr. John Curwen of London, on the 9th of May,

1724, deposited by me, Henry Forest, Curate of Loweswater. Y^e said 9th of May, y^e said Mr. Curwen went to the office, and saw my name registered there, &c. This, by the Providence of God, came by lot to this poor place.

Hæc testor H. Forest.'

In another place he records, that the sycamore-trees were planted in the church-yard in 1710.

He died in 1741, having been curate thirty-four years. It is not improbable that H. Forest was the gentleman who assisted Robert Walker in his classical studies at Loweswater.

To this parish register is prefixed a motto, of which the following verses are a part:

'Invigilate viri, tacito nam tempora gressu
 Diffugiunt, nulloque sono convertitur annus;
 Utendum est ætate, cito pede præterit ætas.'

Page 292.

'We feel that we are greater than we know.'

'And feel that I am happier than I know.'—

MILTON.

The allusion to the Greek Poet will be obvious to the classical reader.

Page 293.

'The White Doe of Rylstone.'

The Poem of the White Doe of Rylstone is founded on a local tradition, and on the Ballad in Percy's Collection, entitled, "The Rising of the North." The tradition is as follows:—'About this time,' not long after the Dissolution, 'a White Doe,' say the aged people of the neighbourhood, 'long continued to make a weekly pilgrimage from Rylstone over the fells of Bolton, and was constantly found in the Abbey Church-yard during divine service; after the close of which she returned home as regularly as the rest of the congregation.'—Dr. WHITTAKER's *History of the Deanery of Craven*.—Rylstone was the property and residence of the Nortons, distinguished in that ill-advised and unfortunate Insurrection; which led me to connect with this tradition the principal circumstances of their fate, as recorded in the Ballad.

'Bolton Priory,' says Dr. Whitaker in his excellent book, *The History and Antiquities of the Deanery of Craven*, 'stands upon a beautiful curvature of the Wharf, on a level sufficiently elevated to protect it from inundations, and low enough for every purpose of picturesque effect.

'Opposite to the East window of the Priory Church, the river washes the foot of a rock nearly perpendicular, and of the richest purple, where several of the mineral beds, which break out, instead of maintaining their usual inclination to the horizon, are twisted by some inconceivable process into undulating and spiral lines. To the South all is soft and delicious; the eye reposes upon a few rich pastures, a moderate reach of the river, sufficiently tranquil to form a mirror to the sun, and the bounding hills beyond, neither too near nor too lofty to exclude, even in winter, any portion of his rays.

'But, after all, the glories of Bolton are on the North. Whatever the most fastidious taste could require to constitute a perfect landscape, is not only found here, but in its proper place. In front, and immediately under the eye, is a smooth expanse of park-like enclosure, spotted with native elm, ash, &c. of the finest growth: on the right a skirting oak wood, with jutting points of grey rock; on the left a rising copse. Still forward, are seen the aged groves of Bolton Park, the growth of centuries; and farther yet, the barren and rocky distances of Simonseat and Barden Fell contrasted with the warmth, fertility, and luxuriant foliage of the valley below.

'About half a mile above Bolton the valley closes, and

either side of the Wharf is overhung by solemn woods, from which huge perpendicular masses of grey rock jut out at intervals.

'This sequestered scene was almost inaccessible till of late, that ridings have been cut on both sides of the river, and the most interesting points laid open by judicious thinnings in the woods. Here a tributary stream rushes from a waterfall, and bursts through a woody glen to mingle its waters with the Wharf: there the Wharf itself is nearly lost in a deep cleft in the rock, and next becomes a horned flood enclosing a woody island—sometimes it reposes for a moment, and then resumes its native character, lively, irregular, and impetuous.

'The cleft mentioned above is the tremendous *STAIN*. This chasm, being incapable of receiving the winter floods, has formed on either side a broad strand of naked gritstone full of rock-basins, or 'pots of the Linn,' which bear witness to the restless impetuosity of so many Northern torrents. But, if here Wharf is lost to the eye, it amply repays another sense by its deep and solemn roar, like 'the Voice of the angry Spirit of the Waters,' heard far above and beneath, amidst the silence of the surrounding woods.

'The terminating object of the landscape is the remains of Barden Tower, interesting from their form and situation, and still more so from the recollections which they excite.'

Page 293.

'Action is transitory—'

This and the five lines that follow were either read or recited by me, more than thirty years since, to the late Mr. Hazlitt, who quoted some expressions in them (imperfectly remembered) in a work of his published several years ago.

Page 293.

'From Bolton's old monastic Tower'

It is to be regretted that at the present day Bolton Abbey wants this ornament: but the Poem, according to the imagination of the Poet, is composed in Queen Elizabeth's time. 'Formerly,' says Dr. Whitaker, 'over the Transept was a tower. This is proved not only from the mention of bells at the Dissolution, when they could have had no other place, but from the pointed roof of the choir, which must have terminated westward, in some building of superior height to the ridge.'

Page 293.

'A Chapel, like a wild bird's nest,'

'The Nave of the Church having been reserved at the Dissolution, for the use of the Saxon Cure, is still a parochial Chapel; and, at this day, is as well kept as the neatest English Cathedral.'

Page 293.

'Who sate in the shade of the Prior's Oak!'

'At a small distance from the great gateway stood the Prior's Oak, which was felled about the year 1720, and sold for 70*l*. According to the price of wood at that time, it could scarcely have contained less than 1400 feet of timber.'

Page 295.

'When Lady Aëliza mourned'

The detail of this tradition may be found in Dr. Whitaker's book, and in a Poem of this Collection, "The Force of Prayer."

Page 295.

'Pass, pass who will, yon chantry door;

'At the East end of the North aisle of Bolton Priory Church, is a chantry belonging to Bethmesly Hall, and

a vault, where, according to tradition, the Claphams' (who inherited this estate, by the female line, from the Mauleverers) 'were interred upright.' John de Clapham, of whom this ferocious act is recorded, was a man of great note in his time: 'he was a vehement partisan of the house of Lancaster, in whom the spirit of his chieftains, the Cliffords, seemed to survive.'

Page 296.

'Who loved the Shepherd Lord to meet'

In this Volume of Poems, will be found one entitled, "Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle, upon the Restoration of Lord Clifford, the Shepherd, to the Estates and Honours of his Ancestors." To that Poem is annexed an account of this personage, chiefly extracted from Burns and Nicholson's History of Cumberland and Westmoreland. It gives me pleasure to add these further particulars concerning him, from Dr. Whitaker, who says he 'retired to the solitude of Barden, where he seems to have enlarged the tower out of a common keeper's lodge, and where he found a retreat equally favourable to taste, to instruction, and to devotion. The narrow limits of his residence show that he had learned to despise the pomp of greatness, and that a small train of servants could suffice him, who had lived to the age of thirty a servant himself. I think this nobleman resided here almost entirely when in Yorkshire, for all his charters which I have seen are dated at Barden.

'His early habits, and the want of those artificial measures of time which even shepherds now possess, had given him a turn for observing the motions of the heavenly bodies; and, having purchased such an apparatus as could then be procured, he amused and informed himself by those pursuits, with the aid of the Canons of Bolton, some of whom are said to have been well versed in what was then known of the science.

'I suspect this nobleman to have been sometimes occupied in a more visionary pursuit, and probably in the same company.

'For, from the family evidences, I have met with two MSS. on the subject of Alchemy, which, from the character, spelling, &c., may almost certainly be referred to the reign of Henry the Seventh. If these were originally deposited with the MSS. of the Cliffords, it might have been for the use of this nobleman. If they were brought from Bolton at the Dissolution, they must have been the work of those Canons whom he almost exclusively conversed with.

'In these peaceful employments Lord Clifford spent the whole reign of Henry the Seventh, and the first years of his son. But in the year 1513, when almost sixty years old, he was appointed to a principal command over the army which fought at Flodden, and showed that the military genius of the family had neither been chilled in him by age, nor extinguished by habits of peace.

'He survived the battle of Flodden ten years, and died April 23rd, 1523, aged about 70. I shall endeavour to appropriate to him a tomb, vault, and chantry, in the choir of the church of Bolton, as I should be sorry to believe that he was deposited, when dead, at a distance from the place which in his lifetime he loved so well.

'By his last will he appointed his body to be interred at Shap, if he died in Westmoreland; or at Bolton, if he died in Yorkshire.

With respect to the Canons of Bolton, Dr. Whitaker shows from MSS. that not only alchemy but astronomy was a favourite pursuit with them.

Page 299.

*'Now joy for you who from the towers
Of Brancepeth look in doubt and fear,'*

Brancepeth Castle stands near the river Were, a few miles from the city of Durham. It formerly belonged

to the Nevilles, Earls of Westmoreland. See Dr. Percy's account.

Page 301.

*'Of mitred Thurston—what a Host
He conquered!'*

See the Historians for the account of this memorable battle, usually denominated the Battle of the Standard

Page 301.

'In that other day of Neville's Cross?'

'In the night before the battle of Durham was stricken and begun, the 17th day of October, anno 1346, there did appear to John Fosse, then Prior of the abbey of Durham, a Vision, commanding him to take the holy Corporax-cloth, wherewith St. Cuthbert did cover the chalice when he used to say mass, and to put the same holy relique like to a banner-cloth upon the point of a spear, and the next morning to go and repair to a place on the west side of the city of Durham, called the Red Hills, where the Maid's Bower wont to be, and there to remain and abide till the end of the battle. To which vision, the Prior obeying, and taking the same for a revelation of God's grace and mercy by the mediation of Holy St. Cuthbert, did accordingly the next morning, with the monks of the said abbey, repair to the said Red Hills, and there most devoutly humbling and prostrating themselves in prayer for the victory in the said battle: (a great multitude of the Scots running and pressing by them, with intention to have spoiled them, yet had no power to commit any violence under such holy persons, so occupied in prayer, being protected and defended by the mighty Providence of Almighty God, and by the mediation of Holy St. Cuthbert, and the presence of the holy relique). And, after many conflicts and warlike exploits there had and done between the English men and the King of Scots and his company, the said battle ended, and the victory was obtained, to the great overthrow and confusion of the Scots, their enemies: And then the said Prior and monks accompanied with Ralph Lord Nevil, and John Nevil his son, and the Lord Percy, and many other nobles of England, returned home and went to the abbey church, there joining in hearty prayer and thanksgiving to God and Holy St. Cuthbert for the victory achieved that day.'

This battle was afterwards called the Battle of Neville's Cross from the following circumstance:—

'On the west side of the city of Durham, where two roads pass each other, a most notable, famous, and goodly cross of stone-work was erected and set up to the honour of God for the victory there obtained in the field of battle, and known by the name of Nevil's Cross, and built at the sole cost of the Lord Ralph Nevil, one of the most excellent and chief persons in the said battle.' The Relique of St. Cuthbert afterwards became of great importance in military events. For soon after this battle, says the same author, 'The prior caused a goodly and sumptuous banner to be made,' (which is then described at great length,) 'and in the midst of the same banner-cloth was the said holy relique and corporax-cloth enclosed, &c. &c., and so sumptuously finished, and absolutely perfected, this banner was dedicated to Holy St. Cuthbert, of intent and purpose that for the future it should be carried to any battle, as occasion should serve; and was never carried and showed at any battle but by the especial grace of God Almighty, and the mediation of Holy St. Cuthbert, it brought home victory; which banner-cloth, after the dissolution of the abbey, fell into the possession of Dean WHITTINGHAM, whose wife, called KATHARINE, being a French woman, (as is most credibly reported by eye-witnesses,) did most injuriously burn the same in her fire, to the open contempt and disgrace of all ancient and goodly reliques.'—Ex-

tracted from a book entitled, "Durham Cathedral, as it stood before the Dissolution of the Monastery." It appears, from the old metrical History, that the above-mentioned banner was carried by the Earl of Surrey to Flodden Field.

Page 304.

*'An edifice of warlike frame
Stands single—Norton Tower its name—'*

It is so called to this day, and is thus described by Dr. Whitaker:—'Rylstone Fell yet exhibits a monument of the old warfare between the Nortons and Cliffords. On a point of very high ground, commanding an immense prospect, and protected by two deep ravines, are the remains of a square tower, expressly said by Dodsworth to have been built by Richard Norton. The walls are of strong grout-work, about four feet thick. It seems to have been three stories high. Breaches have been industriously made in all the sides, almost to the ground, to render it untenable.

'But Norton Tower was probably a sort of pleasure-house in summer, as there are, adjoining to it, several large mounds, (two of them are pretty entire,) of which no other account can be given than that they were butts for large companies of archers.

'The place is savagely wild, and admirably adapted to the uses of a watch tower.'

Page 308.

*'—despoil and desolation
O'er Rylstone's fair domain have blown;'*

'After the attainder of Richard Norton, his estates were forfeited to the crown, where they remained till the 2nd or 3rd of James; they were then granted to Francis Earl of Cumberland.' From an accurate survey made at that time, several particulars have been extracted by Dr. W. It appears that 'the mansion-house was then in decay. Immediately adjoining is a close, called the Vivery, so called, undoubtedly, from the French Vivier, or modern Latin Vivarium; for there are near the house large remains of a pleasure-ground, such as were introduced in the earlier part of Elizabeth's time, with topiary works, fish-ponds, an island, &c. The whole township was ranged by an hundred and thirty red deer, the property of the Lord, which, together with the wood, had, after the attainder of Mr. Norton, been committed to Sir Stephen Tempest. The wood, it seems, had been abandoned to depredations, before which time it appears that the neighbourhood must have exhibited a forest-like and sylvan scene. In this survey among the old tenants, is mentioned one Richard Kitchen, butler to Mr. Norton, who rose in rebellion with his master, and was executed at Ripon.'

Page 310.

'In the deep fork of Amerdale;'

'At the extremity of the parish of Burnsall, the valley of Wharf forks off into two great branches, one of which retains the name of Wharfedale, to the source of the river; the other is usually called Littondale, but more anciently and properly, Amerdale. Dernbrook, which runs along an obscure valley from the N.W., is derived from a Teutonic word, signifying concealment.'—DR. WHITAKER.

Page 310.

*'When the Bells of Rylstone played
Their Sabbath music—'God us ayde!'*

On one of the bells of Rylstone church, which seems coeval with the building of the tower, is this cypher, 'I. N.' for John Norton, and the motto, 'God us ayde.'

Page 311.

'The grassy rock-encircled Pound'

Which is thus described by Dr. Whitaker:—'On the plain summit of the hill are the foundations of a strong wall stretching from the S.W. to the N.E. corner of the tower, and to the edge of a very deep glen. From this glen, a ditch, several hundred yards long, runs south to another deep and rugged ravine. On the N. and W. where the banks are very steep, no wall or mound is discoverable, paling being the only fence that could stand on such ground.

'From the Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border, it appears that such pounds for deer, sheep, &c. were far from being uncommon in the south of Scotland. The principle of them was something like that of a wire mouse-trap. On the declivity of a steep hill, the bottom and sides of which were fenced so as to be impassable, a wall was constructed nearly level with the surface on the outside, yet so high within, that without wings it was impossible to escape in the opposite direction. Care was probably taken that these enclosures should contain better feed than the neighbouring parks or forests; and whoever is acquainted with the habits of these sequacious animals, will easily conceive, that if the leader was once tempted to descend into the snare, a herd would follow.'

I cannot conclude without recommending, to the notice of all lovers of beautiful scenery, Bolton Abbey and its neighbourhood. This enchanting spot belongs to the Duke of Devonshire; and the superintendence of it has for some years been entrusted to the Rev. William Carr, who has most skillfully opened out its features; and, in whatever he has added, has done justice to the place, by working with an invisible hand of art in the very spirit of nature.

Page 312.

'Ecclesiastical Sonnets.'

During the month of December, 1820, I accompanied a much-beloved and honoured Friend in a walk through different parts of his estate, with a view to fix upon the site of a new Church which he intended to erect. It was one of the most beautiful mornings of a mild season,—our feelings were in harmony with the cherishing influences of the scene; and such being our purpose, we were naturally led to look back upon past events with wonder and gratitude, and on the future with hope. Not long afterwards, some of the Sonnets which will be found towards the close of this series were produced as a private memorial of that morning's occupation.

The Catholic Question, which was agitated in Parliament about that time, kept my thoughts in the same course; and it struck me that certain points in the Ecclesiastical History of our Country might advantageously be presented to view in verse. Accordingly, I took up the subject, and what I now offer to the reader was the result.

When this work was far advanced, I was agreeably surprised to find that my friend, Mr. Southey, had been engaged with similar views in writing a concise History of the Church in England. If our Productions, thus unintentionally coinciding, shall be found to illustrate each other, it will prove a high gratification to me, which I am sure my friend will participate.

W. WORDSWORTH.

RYDAL MOUNT,
January 24, 1822.

For the convenience of passing from one point of the subject to another without shocks of abruptness, this work has taken the shape of a series of Sonnets: but the

Reader, it is to be hoped, will find that the pictures are often so closely connected as to have jointly the effect of passages of a poem in a form of stanza to which there is no objection but one that bears upon the Poet only—its difficulty.

Page 312.

'Did holy Paul,' &c.

Stillingfleet adduces many arguments in support of this opinion, but they are unconvincing. The latter part of this Sonnet refers to a favourite notion of Roman Catholic writers, that Joseph of Arimathea and his companions brought Christianity into Britain, and built a rude church at Glastonbury; alluded to hereafter, in a passage upon the dissolution of monasteries.

Page 313.

'That Hill, whose flowery platform,' &c.

This hill at St. Alban's must have been an object of great interest to the imagination of the venerable Bede, who thus describes it, with a delicate feeling, delightful to meet with in that rude age, traces of which are frequent in his works:—'*Variis herbarum floribus depictus imò usquequaque vestitus, in quo nihil repente arduum, nihil præceps, nihil abruptum, quem lateribus longè latèque deductum in modum æquoris natura complanat, dignum deducit eum pro insitâ sibi specie venustatis jam olim reddens, qui beati martyris cruore dicaretur.*'

Page 314.

*'Nor wants the cause the panic-striking aid
Of hallooings'*

Alluding to the victory gained under Germanus.—See Bede.

Page 314.

*'By men yet scarcely conscious of a care
For other monuments than those of Earth;'*

The last six lines of this Sonnet are chiefly from the prose of Daniel; and here I will state (though to the Readers whom this Poem will chiefly interest it is unnecessary) that my obligations to other prose writers are frequent,—obligations which, even if I had not a pleasure in courting, it would have been presumptuous to shun, in treating an historical subject. I must, however, particularise Fuller, to whom I am indebted in the Sonnet upon Wicliffe and in other instances. And upon the acquittal of the Seven Bishops I have done little more than versify a lively description of that event in the MS. Memoirs of the first Lord Lonsdale.

Page 314. Sonnet xii.

'Ethelforth reached the convent of Bangor, he perceived the Monks, twelve hundred in number, offering prayers for the success of their countrymen: 'if they are praying against us,' he exclaimed, 'they are fighting against us;' and he ordered them to be first attacked: they were destroyed; and, appalled by their fate, the courage of Brocmail wavered, and he fled from the field in dismay. Thus abandoned by their leader, his army soon gave way, and Ethelforth obtained a decisive conquest. Ancient Bangor itself soon fell into his hands, and was demolished; the noble monastery was levelled to the ground; its library, which is mentioned as a large one, the collection of ages, the repository of the most precious monuments of the ancient Britons, was consumed; half ruined walls, gates, and rubbish were all that remained of the magnificent edifice.'—See Turner's valuable history of the Anglo-Saxons.

Taliesin was present at the battle which preceded this desolation.

The account Bede gives of this remarkable event, sug-

gests a most striking warning against National and Religious prejudices.

Page 315. Sonnet xv.

The person of Paulinus is thus described by Bede, from the memory of an eye-witness:—*'Longæ statura, paululum incurvus, nigro capillo, facie macilentâ, naso adunco, pertenui, venerabilis simul et terribilis aspectu.'*

Page 315.

'Man's life is like a Sparrow,'

See the original of this speech in Bede.—The Conversion of Edwin, as related by him, is highly interesting—and the breaking up of this Council accompanied with an event so striking and characteristic, that I am tempted to give it at length in a translation. 'Who, exclaimed the King, when the Council was ended, shall first desecrate the altars and the temples? I, answered the Chief Priest; for who more fit than myself, through the wisdom which the true God hath given me, to destroy, for the good example of others, what in foolishness I worshipped? Immediately, casting away vain superstition, he besought the King to grant him what the laws did not allow to a priest, arms and a courser (equum emissarium); which mounting, and furnished with a sword and lance he proceeded to destroy the Idols. The crowd, seeing this, thought him mad—he however, halted not, but, approaching, he profaned the temple, casting against it the lance which he had held in his hand, and, exulting in acknowledgment of the worship of the true God, he ordered his companions to pull down the temple, with all its enclosures. The place is shown where those idols formerly stood, not far from York, at the source of the river Derwent, and is at this day called Gormund Gaham, ubi pontifex ille, inspirante Deo vero, poluit ac destruxit eas, quas ipse sacraverat aras.' The last expression is a pleasing proof that the venerable monk of Wearmouth was familiar with the poetry of Virgil.

Page 315.

*'such the inviting voice
Heard near fresh streams;'*

The early propagators of Christianity were accustomed to preach near rivers, for the convenience of baptism.

Page 315. Sonnet xix.

Having spoken of the zeal, disinterestedness, and temperance of the clergy of those times, Bede thus proceeds:—*'Unde et in magna erat veneratione tempore illo religionis habitus, ita ut ubicunque clericus aliquis, aut monachus adveniret, gaudenter ab omnibus tuncquam Dei famulus exciperetur. Etiam si in itinere peregrinus inveniretur, accurrebant, et flexâ cervice, vel manu signari, vel ore illius se benedicti, gaudebant. Verbis quoque horum exhortatoriis diligenter auditum præbebant. Lib. iii. cap. 26.'*

Page 316.

'The people work like congregated bees.'

See, in Turner's History, vol. iii. p. 528, the account of the erection of Ramsey Monastery. Penances were removable by the performance of acts of charity and benevolence.

Page 316.

'pain narrows not his cares.'

Through the whole of his life, Alfred was subject to grievous maladies.

Page 317.

'Woe to the Crown that doth the Cowl obey!'

The violent measures carried on under the influence of Dunstan, for strengthening the Benedictine Order, were a

leading cause of the second series of Danish invasions.—*See Turner.*

Page 319.

'Here Man more purely lives,' &c.

'Bonum est nos hic esse, quia homo vivit purius, cadit rarius, surgit velocius, incedit cautius, quiescit securius, moritur felicius, purgatur citius, præmiatur copiosius,' Bernard. 'This sentence,' says Dr. Whitaker, 'is usually inscribed in some conspicuous part of the Cistercian houses.'

Page 321.

'Whom Obloquy pursues with hideous bark:'

The list of foul names bestowed upon those poor creatures is long and curious;—and, as is, alas! too natural, most of the opprobrious appellations are drawn from circumstances into which they were forced by their persecutors, who even consolidated their miseries into one reproachful term, calling them Patarenians, or Paturnins, from *pati*, to suffer.

Dwellers with wolves, she names them, for the pine
And green oak are their covert; as the gloom
Of night oft foils their enemy's design,
She calls them Riders on the flying broom;
Sorcerers, whose frame and aspect have become
One and the same through practices malign.

Page 322.

*'And the green lizard and the gilded newt
Lead unmolested lives, and die of age.'*

These two lines are adopted from a MS., written about the year 1770, which accidentally fell into my possession. The close of the preceding Sonnet on monastic voluptuousness is taken from the same source, as is the verse, 'Where Venus sits,' &c., and the line, 'Once ye were holy, ye are holy still,' in a subsequent Sonnet.

Page 324.

*'One (like those prophets whom God sent of old)
Transfigured,' &c.*

'M. Latimer suffered his keeper very quietly to pull off his hose, and his other array, which to looke unto was very simple: and being stripped into his shrowd, he seemed as comely a person to them that were present, as one should lightly see: and whereas in his clothes hee appeared a withered and crooked sillie (weak) olde man, he now stood bolt upright, as comely a father as one might lightly behold. * * * Then they brought a faggotte, kindled with fire, and laid the same downe at doctor Ridley's feete. To whome M. Latimer spake in this manner, 'Bee of good comfort, master Ridley, and play the man: wee shall this day light such a candle by God's grace in England, as I trust shall never bee put out.'—*For's Acts, &c.*

Similar alterations in the outward figure and deportment of persons brought to like trial were not uncommon. See note to the above passage in Dr. Wordsworth's Ecclesiastical Biography, for an example in an humble Welsh fisherman.

Page 325.

'The gift exalting, and with playful smile:'

'On foot they went, and took Salisbury in their way, purposely to see the good Bishop, who made Mr. Hooker sit at his own table; which Mr. Hooker boasted of with much joy and gratitude when he saw his mother and friends; and at the Bishop's parting with him, the Bishop gave him good counsel and his benediction, but forgot to give him money; which when the Bishop had considered, he sent a servant in all haste to call Richard back to

him, and at Richard's return, the Bishop said to him, 'Richard, I sent for you back to lend you a horse which hath carried me many a mile, and I thank God with much ease,' and presently delivered into his hand a walking-staff, with which he professed he had travelled through many parts of Germany; and he said, 'Richard, I do not give, but lend you my horse; be sure you be honest, and bring my horse back to me, at your return this way to Oxford. And I do now give you ten groats to bear your charges to Exeter; and here is ten groats more, which I charge you to deliver to your mother, and tell her I send her a Bishop's benediction with it, and beg the continuance of her prayers for me. And if you bring my horse back to me, I will give you ten groats more to carry you on foot to the college; and so God bless you, good Richard.'—See *Walton's Life of Richard Hooker*.

Page 325.

— *'craftily incites
The overweening, personates the mad.'*

A common device in religious and political conflicts.
—See *Strype* in support of this instance.

Page 326.

'Laud,'

In this age a word cannot be said in praise of Laud, or even in compassion for his fate, without incurring a charge of bigotry; but fearless of such imputation, I concur with Hume, 'that it is sufficient for his vindication to observe that his errors were the most excusable of all those which prevailed during that zealous period.' A key to the right understanding of those parts of his conduct that brought the most odium upon him in his own time, may be found in the following passage of his speech before the bar of the House of Peers:—'Ever since I came in place, I have laboured nothing more than that the external public worship of God, so much slighted in divers parts of this kingdom, might be preserved, and that with as much decency and uniformity as might be. For I evidently saw that the public neglect of God's service in the outward face of it, and the nasty lying of many places dedicated to that service, had almost cast a damp upon the true and inward worship of God, which while we live in the body, needs external helps, and all little enough to keep it in any vigour.'

Page 329.

'*The Pilgrim Fathers.*'

American episcopacy, in union with the church in England, strictly belongs to the general subject; and I here make my acknowledgments to my American friends, Bishop Doane, and Mr. Henry Reed of Philadelphia, for having suggested to me the propriety of adverting to it, and pointed out the virtues and intellectual qualities of Bishop White, which so eminently fitted him for the great work he undertook. Bishop White was consecrated at Lambeth, Feb. 4, 1787, by Archbishop Moore; and before his long life was closed, twenty-six bishops had been consecrated in America, by himself. For his character and opinions, see his own numerous Works, and a "Sermon in commemoration of him, by George Washington Doane, Bishop of New Jersey."

Page 329.

'*A genial hearth——
And a refined rusticity, belong
To the neat mansion,*'

Among the benefits arising, as Mr. Coleridge has well observed, from a Church establishment of endowments corresponding with the wealth of the country to which

it belongs, may be reckoned as eminently important, the examples of civility and refinement which the Clergy stationed at intervals, afford to the whole people. This established clergy in many parts of England have long been, as they continue to be, the principal bulwark against barbarism, and the link which unites the sequestered peasantry with the intellectual advancement of the age. Nor is it below the dignity of the subject to observe, that their taste, as acting upon rural residences and scenery often furnishes models which country gentlemen, who are more at liberty to follow the caprices of fashion, might profit by. The precincts of an old residence must be treated by ecclesiastics with respect, both from prudence and necessity. I remember being much pleased, some years ago, at Rose Castle, the rural seat of the See of Carlisle, with a style of garden and architecture, which, if the place had belonged to a wealthy layman, would no doubt have been swept away. A parsonage-house generally stands not far from the church; this proximity imposes favourable restraints, and sometimes suggests an affecting union of the accommodations and elegances of life with the outward signs of piety and mortality. With pleasure I recal to mind a happy instance of this in the residence of an old and much-valued Friend in Oxfordshire. The house and church stand parallel to each other, at a small distance; a circular lawn or rather grass-plot, spreads between them; shrubs and trees curve from each side of the dwelling, veiling, but not hiding, the church. From the front of this dwelling, no part of the burial-ground is seen; but as you wind by the side of the shrubs towards the steeple-end of the church, the eye catches a single, small, low, monumental headstone, moss-grown, sinking into, and gently inclining towards the earth. Advance, and the churchyard, populous and gay with glittering tombstones, opens upon the view. This humble, and beautiful parsonage called forth a tribute, for which see the seventh of the "Miscellaneous Sonnets," Part 3.

Page 332. Sonnet xxxii.

This is still continued in many churches in Westmoreland. It takes place in the month of July, when the floor of the stalls is strewn with fresh rushes; and hence it is called the 'Rush-bearing.'

Page 332.

'*Teaching us to forget them or forgive.*'

This is borrowed from an affecting passage in Mr. George Dyer's history of Cambridge.

Page 332.

— *'had we, like them, endured
Sore stress of apprehension,'*

See Burnet, who is unusually animated on this subject; the east wind, so anxiously expected and prayed for, was called the 'Protestant wind.'

Page 333.

'*Yet will we not conceal the precious Cross,
Like men ashamed:—*'

The Lutherans have retained the Cross within their churches: it is to be regretted that we have not done the same.

Page 334.

'*Or like the Alpine Mount, that takes its name
From roseate hues; &c.*

Some say that Monte Rosa takes its name from a belt of rock at its summit—a very unpoetical and scarcely a probable supposition.

MEMORIALS OF A TOUR IN SCOTLAND, 1831.

Page 338.

'Highland Hut.'

This sonnet describes the *exterior* of a Highland hut, as often seen under morning or evening sunshine. To the authoress of the "Address to the Wind," and other poems, in this volume, who was my fellow-traveller in this tour, I am indebted for the following extract from her journal, which accurately describes, under particular circumstances, the beautiful appearance of the *interior* of one of these rude habitations.

'On our return from the Trossachs the evening began to darken, and it rained so heavily that we were completely wet before we had come two miles, and it was dark when we landed with our boatman, at his hut upon the banks of Loch Katrine. I was faint from cold: the good woman had provided, according to her promise, a better fire than we had found in the morning; and, indeed, when I sat down in the chimney-corner of her smoky biggin, I thought I had never felt more comfortable in my life: a pan of coffee was boiling for us, and, having put our clothes in the way of drying, we all sat down thankful for a shelter. We could not prevail upon our boatman, the master of the house, to draw near the fire, though he was cold and wet, or to suffer his wife to get him dry clothes till she had served us, which she did most willingly, though not very expeditiously.

'A Cumberland man of the same rank would not have had such a notion of what was fit and right in his own house, or, if he had, one would have accused him of servility; but in the Highlander it only seemed like politeness (however erroneous and painful to us), naturally growing out of the dependence of the inferiors of the clan upon their laird; he did not, however, refuse to let his wife bring out the whisky bottle for his refreshment, at our request. "She keeps a dram," as the phrase is: indeed, I believe there is scarcely a lonely house by the wayside, in Scotland, where travellers may not be accommodated with a dram. We asked for sugar, butter, barley-bread, and milk; and, with a smile and a stare more of kindness than wonder, she replied, "Ye'll get that," bringing each article separately. We caroused our cups of coffee, laughing like children at the strange atmosphere in which we were: the smoke came in gusts, and spread along the walls; and above our heads in the chimney (where the hens were roosting) it appeared like clouds in the sky. We laughed and laughed again, in spite of the smarting of our eyes, yet had a quieter pleasure in observing the beauty of the beams and rafters gleaming between the clouds of smoke: they had been crusted over, and varnished by many winters, till, where the firelight fell upon them, they had become as glossy as black rocks, on a sunny day, cased in ice. When we had eaten our supper we sat about half an hour, and I think I never felt so deeply the blessing of a hospitable welcome and a warm fire. The man of the house repeated from time to time that we should often tell of this night when we got to our homes, and interposed praises of his own lake, which he had more than once, when we were returning in the boat, ventured to say was "bonnier than Loch Lomond." Our companion from the Trossachs, who, it appeared, was an Edinburgh drawing-master going, during the vacation, on a pedestrian tour to John o'Groat's house, was to sleep in the barn with my fellow-travellers, where the man said he had plenty of dry hay. I do not believe that the hay of the Highlands is ever very dry, but this year it had a better chance than usual: wet or dry, however, the next morning they said they had slept comfortably. When I went to bed, the mistress, desiring me to "go ben," attended me with a candle, and assured me that the bed was dry, though not "sic as I had been used to." It was of chaff; there were two others in the room, a cupboard

and two chests, upon one of which stood milk in wooden vessels, covered over. The walls of the house were of stone unplastered: it consisted of three apartments, the cowhouse at one end, the kitchen or house in the middle, and the spence at the other end; the rooms were divided, not up to the rigging, but only to the beginning of the roof, so that there was a free passage for light and smoke from one end of the house to the other. I went to bed some time before the rest of the family; the door was shut between us, and they had a bright fire, which I could not see, but the light it sent up amongst the varnished rafters and beams, which crossed each other in almost as intricate and fantastic a manner as I have seen the under-boughs of a large beech tree withered by the depth of shade above, produced the most beautiful effect that can be conceived. It was like what I should suppose an underground cave or temple to be, with a dripping or moist roof, and the moonlight entering in upon it by some means or other; and yet the colours were more like those of melted gems. I lay looking up till the light of the fire faded away, and the man and his wife and child had crept into their bed at the other end of the room: I did not sleep much, but passed a comfortable night; for my bed, though hard, was warm and clean: the unusualness of my situation prevented me from sleeping. I could hear the waves beat against the shore of the lake; a little rill close to the door made a much louder noise, and, when I sat up in my bed, I could see the lake through an open window-place at the bed's head. Add to this, it rained all night. I was less occupied by remembrance of the Trossachs, beautiful as they were, than the vision of the Highland hut, which I could not get out of my head; I thought of the Faery-land of Spenser, and what I had read in romance at other times; and then what a feast it would be for a London Pantomime-maker could he but transplant it to Drury-lane, with all its beautiful colours!"—*MS.*

Page 340.

'Once on those steepes I roamed'

The following is from the same MS., and gives an account of the visit to Bothwell Castle here alluded to:—

'It was exceedingly delightful to enter thus unexpectedly upon such a beautiful region. The castle stands nobly, overlooking the Clyde. When we came up to it, I was hurt to see that flower-borders had taken place of the natural overgrowths of the ruin, the scattered stones, and wild plants. It is a large and grand pile of red freestone, harmonising perfectly with the rocks of the river, from which, no doubt, it has been hewn. When I was a little accustomed to the unnaturalness of a modern garden, I could not help admiring the excessive beauty and luxuriance of some of the plants, particularly the purple-flowered clematis, and a broad-leaved creeping plant without flowers, which scrambled up the castle wall, along with the ivy, and spread its vine-like branches so lavishly that it seemed to be in its natural situation, and one could not help thinking that, though not self-planted among the ruins of this country, it must somewhere have its native abode in such places. If Bothwell Castle had not been close to the Douglas mansion, we should have been disgusted with the possessor's miserable conception of *adorning* such a venerable ruin; but it is so very near to the house, that of necessity the pleasure-grounds must have extended beyond it, and perhaps the neatness of a shaven lawn and the complete desolation natural to a ruin might have made an unpleasant contrast; and, besides being within the precincts of the pleasure-grounds, and so very near to the dwelling of a noble family, it has forfeited, in some degree, its independent majesty, and becomes a tributary to the mansion: its solitude being interrupted, it has no longer the command over the mind in sending it back into past times, or excluding the ordinary feelings which we bear about us in daily life. We had then only to re-

gret that the castle and the house were so near to each other; and it was impossible *not* to regret it; for the ruin presides in state over the river, far from city or town, as if it might have a peculiar privilege to preserve its memorials of past ages, and maintain its own character for centuries to come. We sat upon a bench under the high trees, and had beautiful views of the different reaches of the river, above and below. On the opposite bank, which is finely wooded with elms and other trees, are the remains of a priory built upon a rock; and rock and ruin are so blended, that it is impossible to separate the one from the other. Nothing can be more beautiful than the little remnant of this holy place: elm trees (for we were near enough to distinguish them by their branches) grow out of the walls, and overshadow a small, but very elegant window. It can scarcely be conceived what a grace the castle and priory impart to each other; and the river Clyde flows on, smooth and unruffled below, seeming to my thoughts more in harmony with the sober and stately images of former times, than if it had roared over a rocky channel, forcing its sound upon the ear. It blended gently with the warbling of the smaller birds, and the chattering of the larger ones, that had made their nests in the ruins. In this fortress the chief of the English nobility were confined after the battle of Bannockburn. If a man is to be a prisoner, he scarcely could have a more pleasant place to solace his captivity; but I thought that, for close confinement, I should prefer the banks of a lake, or the seaside. The greatest charm of a brook or river is in the liberty to pursue it through its windings: you can then take it in whatever mood you like; silent or noisy, sportive or quiet. The beauties of a brook or river must be sought, and the pleasure is in going in search of them; those of a lake or of the sea come to you of themselves. These rude warriors cared little, perhaps, about either; and yet, if one may judge from the writings of Chaucer, and from the old romances, more interesting passions were connected with natural objects in the days of chivalry than now; though going in search of scenery, as it is called, had not then been thought of. I had previously heard nothing of Bothwell Castle, at least nothing that I remembered; therefore, perhaps, my pleasure was greater, compared with what I received elsewhere, than others might feel.—*MS. Journal.*

Page 341.

'Hart's-horn Tree.'

'In the time of the first Robert de Clifford, in the year 1333 or 1334, Edward Baliol king of Scotland came into Westmoreland, and stayed some time with the said Robert at his castles of Appleby, Brougham, and Pen-dragon. And during that time they ran a stag by a single greyhound out of Whinfell Park to Redkirk, in Scotland, and back again to this place; where, being both spent, the stag leaped over the pales, but died on the other side; and the greyhound, attempting to leap, fell, and died on the contrary side. In memory of this fact the stag's horns were nailed upon a tree just by, and (the dog being named Hercules) this rhythm was made upon them:

'Hercules kill'd Hart a greese,
And Hart a greese kill'd Hercules.'

The tree to this day bears the name of Hart's-horn Tree. The horns in process of time were almost grown over by the growth of the tree, and another pair was put up in their place.—*Nicholson and Burns's History of Westmoreland and Cumberland.*

The tree has now disappeared, but I well remember its imposing appearance as it stood, in a decayed state, by the side of the high road leading from Penrith to Appleby. This whole neighbourhood abounds in interesting traditions and vestiges of antiquity, viz., Julian's Bower;

Brougham and Penrith Castles; Penrith Beacon, and the curious remains in Penrith Church-yard; Arthur's Round Table, and, close by, Maybrough; the excavation, called the Giant's Cave, on the banks of the Emont; Long Meg and her Daughters, near Eden, &c. &c.

Page 345.

'Wings at my shoulders seem to play.'

In these lines I am under obligation to the exquisite picture of "Jacob's Dream," by Mr. Alstone, now in America. It is pleasant to make this public acknowledgment to a man of genius, whom I have the honour to rank among my friends.

Page 349.

'But if thou, like Cocytus,' &c.

Many years ago, when I was at Greta Bridge, in Yorkshire, the hostess of the inn, proud of her skill in etymology, said, that "the name of the river was taken from the *bridge*, the form of which, as every one must notice, exactly resembled a great A." Dr. Whitaker has derived it from the word of common occurrence in the north of England, "*to greet*;" signifying to lament aloud, mostly with weeping: a conjecture rendered more probable from the stony and rocky channel of both the Cumberland and Yorkshire rivers. The Cumberland Greta, though it does not, among the country people, take up *that* name till within three miles of its disappearance in the river Derwent, may be considered as having its source in the mountain cove of Wythburn, and flowing through Thirlmere, the beautiful features of which lake are known only to those who, travelling between Grasmere and Keswick, have quitted the main road in the vale of Wythburn, and, crossing over to the opposite side of the lake, have proceeded with it on the right hand.

The channel of the Greta, immediately above Keswick, has, for the purposes of building, been in a great measure cleared of the immense stones which, by their concussion in high floods, produced the loud and awful noises described in the sonnet.

'The scenery upon this river,' says Mr. Southey in his Colloquies, 'where it passes under the woody side of Latrigg, is of the finest and most memorable kind:—

—'ambiguo lapsu refluuntque fluitque,
Occurrensque sibi venturas aspicit undas.'

Page 349.

'By hooded votresses,' &c.

Attached to the church of Brigham was formerly a chantry, which held a moiety of the manor; and in the decayed parsonage some vestiges of monastic architecture are still to be seen.

Page 350.

'Mary Queen of Scots landing at Workington.'

'The fears and impatience of Mary were so great,' says Robertson, 'that she got into a fisher-boat, and with about twenty attendants landed at Workington, in Cumberland; and thence she was conducted with many marks of respect to Carlisle.' The apartment in which the Queen had slept at Workington Hall (where she was received by Sir Henry Curwen as became her rank and misfortunes) was long preserved, out of respect to her memory, as she had left it; and one cannot but regret that some necessary alterations in the mansion could not be effected without its destruction.

Page 350.

St. Bees' Heads, anciently called the Cliff of Baruth, are a conspicuous sea-mark for all vessels sailing in the N.E. parts of the Irish Sea. In a bay, one side of which

is formed by the southern headland, stands the village of St. Bees; a place distinguished, from very early times, for its religious and scholastic foundations.

'St. Bees,' say Nicholson and Burns, 'had its name from Bega, an holy woman from Ireland, who is said to have founded here, about the year of our Lord 650, a small monastery, where afterwards a church was built in memory of her.

'The aforesaid religious house, being destroyed by the Danes, was restored by William de Meschiens, son of Ranulph, and brother of Ranulph de Meschiens, first Earl of Cumberland after the Conquest; and made a cell of a prior and six Benedictine monks to the Abbey of St. Mary at York.'

Several traditions of miracles, connected with the foundation of the first of these religious houses, survive among the people of the neighbourhood; one of which is alluded to in these Stanzas; and another, of a somewhat bolder and more peculiar character, has furnished the subject of a spirited poem by the Rev. R. Parkinson, M.A., late Divinity Lecturer of St. Bees' College, and now Fellow of the Collegiate Church of Manchester.

After the dissolution of the monasteries, Archbishop Grindal founded a free school at St. Bees, from which the counties of Cumberland and Westmoreland have derived great benefit; and recently, under the patronage of the Earl of Lonsdale, a college has been established there for the education of ministers for the English Church. The old Conventual Church has been repaired under the superintendence of the Rev. Dr. Ainger, the Head of the College; and is well worthy of being visited by any strangers who might be led to the neighbourhood of this celebrated spot.

The form of stanza in this Poem, and something in the style of versification, are adopted from the "St. Monica," a poem of much beauty upon a monastic subject, by Charlotte Smith: a lady to whom English verse is under greater obligations than are likely to be either acknowledged or remembered. She wrote little, and that little unambitiously, but with true feeling for rural nature, at a time when nature was not much regarded by English Poets; for in point of time her earlier writings preceded, I believe, those of Cowper and Burns.

Page 350.

'Are not, in sooth, their Requiems sacred ties'

I am aware that I am here treading upon tender ground; but to the intelligent reader I feel that no apology is due. The prayers of survivors, during passionate grief for the recent loss of relatives and friends, as the object of those prayers could no longer be the suffering body of the dying, would naturally be ejaculated for the souls of the departed; the barriers between the two worlds dissolving before the power of love and faith. The ministers of religion, from their habitual attendance upon sick-beds, would be daily witnesses of these benign results; and hence would be strongly tempted to aim at giving to them permanence, by embodying them in rites and ceremonies, recurring at stated periods. All this, as it was in course of nature, so was it blameless, and even praiseworthy; since some of its effects, in that rude state of society, could not but be salutary. No reflecting person, however, can view without sorrow the abuses which rose out of thus formalising sublime instincts, and disinterested movements of passion, and perverting them into means of gratifying the ambition and rapacity of the priesthood. But, while we deplore and are indignant at these abuses, it would be a great mistake if we imputed the origin of the offices to prospective selfishness on the part of the monks and clergy: they were at first sincere in their sympathy, and in their degree dupes rather of their own creed, than artful and designing men. Charity is, upon the whole, the safest guide that we can take in

judging our fellow-men, whether of past ages, or of the present time.

Page 352.

'And they are led by noble Hillary.'

THE TOWER OF REFUGE, an ornament to Douglas Bay, was erected chiefly through the humanity and zeal of Sir William Hillary; and he also was the founder of the life-boat establishment, at that place; by which, under his superintendence, and often by his exertions at the imminent hazard of his own life, many seamen and passengers have been saved.

Page 353.

'By a retired Mariner.'

This unpretending sonnet is by a gentleman nearly connected with me, and I hope, as it falls so easily into its place, that both the writer and the reader will excuse its appearance here.

Page 353.

'Off with yon cloud, old Snafell!'

The summit of this mountain is well chosen by Cowley as the scene of the "Vision," in which the spectral angel discourses with him concerning the government of Oliver Cromwell. 'I found myself,' says he, 'on the top of that famous hill in the Island Mona, which has the prospect of three great, and not long since most happy, kingdoms. As soon as ever I looked upon them, they called forth the sad representation of all the sins and all the miseries that had overwhelmed them these twenty years.' It is not to be denied that the changes now in progress, and the passions, and the way in which they work, strikingly resemble those which led to the disasters the philosophic writer so feelingly bewails. God grant that the resemblance may not become still more striking as months and years advance!

Page 354.

'On revisiting Dunolly Castle.'

This ingenious piece of workmanship, as I afterwards learned, had been executed for their own amusement by some labourers employed about the place.

Page 355.

'Cave of Staffa.'

The reader may be tempted to exclaim, "How came this and the two following sonnets to be written, after the dissatisfaction expressed in the preceding one?" In fact, at the risk of incurring the reasonable displeasure of the master of the steam-boat, I returned to the cave, and explored it under circumstances more favourable to those imaginative impressions which it is so wonderfully fitted to make upon the mind.

Page 355.

*'Hope smiled when your nativity was cast,
Children of summer!'*

Upon the head of the columns which form the front of the cave, rests a body of decomposed basaltic matter, which was richly decorated with that large bright flower, the ox-eyed daisy. I had noticed the same flower growing with profusion among the bold rocks on the western coast of the Isle of Man; making a brilliant contrast with their black and gloomy surfaces.

Page 356.

'Iona.'

The four last lines of this sonnet are adopted from a well-known sonnet of Russel, as conveying my feeling better than any words of my own could do.

Page 357.

'Yet fetched from Paradise.'

It is to be feared that there is more of the poet than the sound etymologist in this derivation of the name Eden. On the western coast of Cumberland is a rivulet which enters the sea at Moresby, known also in the neighbourhood by the name of Eden. May not the latter syllable come from the word Dean, *a valley*? Langdale, near Ambleside is by the inhabitants called Langden. The former syllable occurs in the name Emont, a principle feeder of the Eden; and the stream which flows, when the tide is out, over Cartmel Sands, is called the Ea—eau, French—aqua, Latin.

Page 357.

'Canal, and Viaduct, and Railway, tell!'

At Corby, a few miles below Nunnery, the Eden is crossed by a magnificent viaduct; and another of these works is thrown over a deep glen or ravine at a very short distance from the main stream.

Page 357.

'A weight of awe not easy to be borne.'

The daughters of Long Meg, placed in a perfect circle eighty yards in diameter, are seventy-two in number above ground; a little way out of the circle stands Long Meg herself, a single stone, eighteen feet high. When I first saw this monument, as I came upon it by surprise, I might over-rate its importance as an object; but, though it will not bear a comparison with Stonehenge, I must say, I have not seen any other relique of those dark ages, which can pretend to rival it in singularity and dignity of appearance.

Page 358.

'To the Earl of Lonsdale.'

This sonnet was written immediately after certain trials, which took place at the Cumberland Assizes, when the Earl of Lonsdale, in consequence of repeated and long-continued attacks upon his character, through the local press, had thought it right to prosecute the conductors and proprietors of three several journals. A verdict of libel was given in one case; and, in the others, the prosecutions were withdrawn, upon the individuals retracting and disavowing the charges, expressing regret that they had been made, and promising to abstain from the like in future.

Page 377.

'Descending to the worm in charity;

I am indebted, here, to a passage in one of Mr. Digby's valuable works.

Page 386.

'All change is perilous, and all chance unsound.'

SPENSER.

SONNETS DEDICATED TO LIBERTY AND ORDER.

Page 387.

'Men of the Western World.'

These lines were written several years ago, when reports prevailed of cruelties committed in many parts of America, by men making a law of their own passions. A far more formidable, as being a more deliberate mischief, has appeared among those States, which have lately broken faith with the public creditor in a manner so infamous. I cannot, however, but look at both evils under a similar relation to inherent good, and hope that the time is not distant when our brethren of the West will wipe off this stain from their name and nation.

Page 401.

'The Horn of Egremont Castle.'

This story is a Cumberland tradition. I have heard it also related of the Hall of Hutton John, an ancient residence of the Hudleston's, in a sequestered valley upon the river Dacor.

Page 406.

'The Russian Fugitive.'

Peter Henry Bruce, having given in his entertaining Memoirs the substance of this Tale, affirms that, besides the concurring reports of others, he had the story from the lady's own mouth.

The Lady Catherine, mentioned towards the close, is the famous Catherine, then bearing that name as the acknowledged Wife of Peter the Great.

Page 427.

'The Farmer of Tilsbury Vale.'

With this picture, which was taken from real life, compare the imaginative one of "The Reverie of Poor Susan," p. 145; and see (to make up the deficiencies of this class) "The Excursion," passim.

Page 436.

'Moss Campion (Silene acaulis).'

This most beautiful plant is scarce in England, though it is found in great abundance upon the mountains of Scotland. The first specimen I ever saw of it, in its native bed, was singularly fine, the tuft or cushion being at least eight inches in diameter, and the root proportionally thick. I have only met with it in two places among our mountains, in both of which I have since sought for it in vain.

Botanists will not, I hope, take it ill, if I caution them against carrying off, inconsiderately, rare and beautiful plants. This has often been done, particularly from Ingleborough and other mountains in Yorkshire, till the species have totally disappeared, to the great regret of lovers of nature living near the places where they grew.

Page 438.

'From the most gentle creature nursed in fields.'

This way of indicating the name of my lamented friend has been found fault with; perhaps rightly so; but I may say in justification of the double sense of the word, that similar allusions are not uncommon in epitaphs. One of the best in our language in verse, I ever read, was upon a person who bore the name of Palmer; and the course of the thought, throughout, turned upon the Life of the Departed, considered as a pilgrimage. Nor can I think that the objection in the present case will have much force with any one who remembers Charles Lamb's beautiful sonnet addressed to his own name, and ending—

'No deed of mine shall shame thee, gentle name!'

Page 440.

Walter Scott . . .	died 21st Sept., 1832.
S. T. Coleridge . . .	„ 25th July, 1834.
Charles Lamb . . .	„ 27th Dec., 1834.
Geo. Crabbe . . .	„ 3rd Feb., 1832.
Felicia Hemans . . .	„ 16th May, 1835.

PREFACE TO THE EXCURSION. Page 527.

*'Descend, prophetic Spirit, that inspirest
The human soul,' &c.*

*'Not mine own fears, nor the prophetic Soul
Of the wide world dreaming on things to come.'*

Shakespeare's Sonnets.

Page 531.

'—much did he see of Men.'

At the risk of giving a shock to the prejudices of artificial society, I have ever been ready to pay homage to the aristocracy of nature; under a conviction that vigorous human-heartedness is the constituent principle of true taste. It may still, however, be satisfactory to have prose testimony how far a Character, employed for purposes of imagination, is founded upon general fact. I, therefore, subjoin an extract from an author who had opportunities of being well acquainted with a class of men, from whom my own personal knowledge emboldened me to draw this portrait.

'We learn from Cæsar and other Roman Writers, that the travelling merchants who frequented Gaul and other barbarous countries, either newly conquered by the Roman arms, or bordering on the Roman conquests, were ever the first to make the inhabitants of those countries familiarly acquainted with the Roman modes of life, and to inspire them with an inclination to follow the Roman fashions, and to enjoy Roman conveniences. In North America, travelling merchants from the Settlements have done and continue to do much more towards civilising the Indian natives, than all the missionaries, papist or protestant, who have ever been sent among them.

It is farther to be observed, for the credit of this most useful class of men, that they commonly contribute, by their personal manners, no less than by the sale of their wares, to the refinement of the people among whom they travel. Their dealings form them to great quickness of wit and acuteness of judgment. Having constant occasion to recommend themselves and their goods, they acquire habits of the most obliging attention, and the most insinuating address. As in their peregrinations they have opportunity of contemplating the manners of various men and various cities, they become eminently skilled in the knowledge of the world. *As they wander, each alone, through thinly-inhabited districts, they form habits of reflection and of sublime contemplation.* With all these qualifications, no wonder, that they should often be, in remote parts of the country, the best mirrors of fashion, and censors of manners; and should contribute much to polish the roughness, and soften the rusticity of our peasantry. It is not more than twenty or thirty years since a young man going from any part of Scotland to England, of purpose to *carry the pack*, was considered as going to lead the life and acquire the fortune of a gentleman. When, after twenty years' absence, in that honourable line of employment, he returned with his acquisitions to his native country, he was regarded as a gentleman to all intents and purposes.'

Heron's Journey in Scotland, Vol. i. p. 89.

Page 548.

'Lost in unsearchable Eternity!'

Since this paragraph was composed, I have read with so much pleasure, in Burnet's Theory of the Earth, a passage expressing corresponding sentiments, excited by objects of a similar nature, that I cannot forbear to transcribe it.

'Siquid verè Natura nobis dedit spectaculum, in hæc tellure, verè gratum, et philosopho dignum, id semel mihi contigisse arbitror; cum ex celsissimâ rupè speculabundus ad oram maris Mediterranæ, hinc æquor cæruleum, illinc tractus Alpinos prospexi; nihil quidem magis dispar aut dissimile, nec in suo genere, magis egregium et singulare. Hoc theatrum ego facillè prætulerim Romanis cunctis, Græcivæ; atque id quod natura hic spectandum exhibet, scenicis ludis omnibus, aut amphitheatri certaminibus. Nihil hic elegans aut re-

nustum, sed ingens et magnificum, et quod placet magnitudine suâ et quâdam specie immensitatis. Hinc intuebar maris æquabilem superficiem, usque et usque diffusam, quantum maximùm oculorum acies ferri potuit; illinc disruptissimam terræ faciem, et vastas moles variè elevatas aut depressas, erectas, propendentes, reclinatas, coacervatas, omni situ inæquali et turbido. Placuit, ex hæc parte, Naturæ unitas et simplicitas, et inexhausta quædam planities; ex alterâ, multiformis confusio magnorum corporum, et insanæ rerum strages: quas cum intuebar, non urbis aliequus aut oppidi, sed confracti mundi rudera, ante oculos habere mihi visus sum.

In singulis ferè montibus erat aliquid insolens et mirabile, sed præ cæteris mihi placebat illa, quâ sedebam, rupes; erat maxima et altissima, et quâ terram respiciebat, molliori ascensu altitudinem suam dissimulabat: quâ verò mare, horrendum præcepit, et quasi ad perpendiculum facta, instar parietis. Præterea facies illa marina adeo erat lævis ac uniformis (quod in rupibus aliquando observare licet) ac si scissa fuisset à summo ad imum, in illo plano; vel terræ motu aliquo, aut fulmine, divulsa.

Ima pars rupis erat cava, recessusque habuit, et saxeos specus, euntes in vacuum montem; sive naturâ pridem factos, sive exesos mari, et undarum crebris ictibus: In hos enim cum impetu ruebant et fragore, æstuantis maris fluctus; quos iterum spumantes reddidit antrum, et quasi ab imo ventre evomuit.

Dextrum latus montis erat præruptum, aspero saxo et nudâ caute; sinistrum non adeo neglexerat Natura, arboribus utpote ornatum: et prope pedem montis rivus limpide aquæ prorupit; qui cum vicinam vallem irrigaverat, lento motu serpens, et per varios mæandros, quasi ad protrahendam vitam, in magno mari absorptus subito perit. Denique in summo vertice promontorii, commodè eminebat saxum, cui insidebam contemplandus. Vale augusta sedes, Rege digna: Augusta rupes, semper mihi memoranda!' P. 89. *Telluris Theoria sacra, &c. Editio secunda.*

Page 556.

'Of Mississippi, or that Northern Stream.'

'A man is supposed to improve by going out into the World, by visiting London. Artificial man does; he extends with his sphere; but, alas! that sphere is microscopic; it is formed of minutiae, and he surrenders his genuine vision to the artist, in order to embrace it in his ken. His bodily senses grow acute, even to barren and inhuman pruriency; while his mental become proportionally obtuse. The reverse is the Man of Mind: he who is placed in the sphere of Nature and of God, might be a mock at Tattersall's and Brooks's, and a sneer at St. James's: he would certainly be swallowed alive by the first *Pizarro* that crossed him:—But when he walks along the river of Amazons; when he rests his eye on the unrivalled Andes; when he measures the long and watered savannah; or contemplates, from a sudden promontory, the distant, vast Pacific—and feels himself a freeman in this vast theatre, and commanding each ready produced fruit of this wilderness, and each progeny of this stream—his exaltation is not less than imperial. He is as gentle, too, as he is great: his emotions of tenderness keep pace with his elevation of sentiment; for he says, 'These were made by a good Being, who, unsought by me, placed me here to enjoy them.' He becomes at once a child and a king. His mind is in himself; from hence he argues, and from hence he acts, and he argues unerringly, and acts magisterially: his mind in himself is also in his God; and therefore he loves, and therefore he soars.'—From the notes upon *The Hurricane*, a Poem, by William Gilbert.

The Reader, I am sure, will thank me for the above quotation, which, though from a strange book, is one of the finest passages of modern English prose.

Page 558.

*'Tis, by comparison, an easy task
Earth to despise,' &c.*

See, upon this subject, Baxter's most interesting review of his own opinions and sentiments in the decline of life. It may be found (lately reprinted) in Dr. Wordsworth's *Ecclesiastical Biography*.

Page 559.

*'Alas! the endowment of immortal Power,
Is matched unequally with custom, time,' &c.*

This subject is treated at length in the Ode—Intimations of Immortality, page 441.

Page 560.

'Knowing the heart of Man is set to be,' &c.

The passage quoted from Daniel is taken from a poem addressed to the Lady Margaret, Countess of Cumberland, and the two last lines, printed in Italics, are by him translated from Seneca. The whole Poem is very beautiful. I will transcribe four stanzas from it, as they contain an admirable picture of the state of a wise Man's mind in a time of public commotion.

Nor is he moved with all the thunder-cracks
Of tyrant's threats, or with the surly brow
Of Power, that proudly sits on others' crimes;
Charged with more crying sins than those he checks.
The storms of sad confusion that may grow
Up in the present for the coming times,
Appal not him; that hath no side at all,
But of himself, and knows the worst can fall.

Although his heart (so near allied to earth)
Cannot but pity the perplexed state
Of troublous and distressed mortality,
That thus make way unto the ugly birth
Of their own sorrows, and do still beget
Affliction upon Imbecility:
Yet seeing thus the course of things must run,
He looks thereon not strange, but as fore-done.

And whilst distraught ambition compasses,
And is encompassed, while as craft deceives,
And is deceived: whilst man doth ransack man,
And builds on blood, and rises by distress;
And th' Inheritance of desolation leaves
To great-expecting hopes: He looks thereon,
As from the shore of peace, with unwet eye,
And bears no venture in Impiety.

Thus, Lady, fares that man that hath prepared
A rest for his desires; and sees all things
Beneath him; and hath learned this book of man,
Full of the notes of frailty; and compared
The best of glory with her sufferings:
By whom, I see, you labour all you can
To plant your heart! and set your thoughts as near
His glorious mansion as your powers can bear.

Page 576.

*'Or rather, as we stand on holy earth
And have the dead around us.'*

Leo. You, Sir, could help me to the history
Of half these graves?

Priest. For eight-score winters past,
With what I've witnessed, and with what I've
heard,
Perhaps I might; — — — — —
By turning o'er these hillocks one by one,

We two could travel, Sir, through a strange
round;

Yet all in the broad highway of the world.

See the Brothers.

Page 580.

'And suffering Nature grieved that one should die.'

Southey's Retrospect.

Page 580.

'And whence that tribute? wherefore these regards?'

The sentiments and opinions here uttered are in unison with those expressed in the following Essay upon Epitaphs, which was furnished by me for Mr. Coleridge's periodical work, the *Friend*; and as they are dictated by a spirit congenial to that which pervades this and the two succeeding books, the sympathising reader will not be displeased to see the Essay here annexed.

ESSAY UPON EPITAPHS.

It needs scarcely be said, that an Epitaph presupposes a Monument, upon which it is to be engraven. Almost all Nations have wished that certain external signs should point out the places where their dead are interred. Among savage tribes unacquainted with letters this has mostly been done either by rude stones placed near the graves, or by mounds of earth raised over them. This custom proceeded obviously from a twofold desire; first, to guard the remains of the deceased from irreverent approach or from savage violation: and, secondly, to preserve their memory. 'Never any,' says Camden, 'neglected burial but some savage nations; as the Bactrians, which cast their dead to the dogs; some varlet philosophers, as Diogenes, who desired to be devoured of fishes; some dissolute courtiers, as Mæcenas, who was wont to say, *Non tumulum curo; sepelit natura relictos*.

I'm careless of a grave:—Nature her dead will save.'

As soon as nations had learned the use of letters, epitaphs were inscribed upon these monuments; in order that their intention might be more surely and adequately fulfilled. I have derived monuments and epitaphs from two sources of feeling: but these do in fact resolve themselves into one. The invention of epitaphs, Weever, in his *Discourse of Funeral Monuments*, says rightly, 'proceeded from the presage or fore-feeling of immortality, implanted in all men naturally, and is referred to the scholars of Linus the Theban poet, who flourished about the year of the world two thousand seven hundred; who first bewailed this Linus their Master, when he was slain, in doleful verses, then called of him *Clina*, afterwards Epitaphia, for that they were first sung at burials, after engraved upon the sepulchres.'

And, verily, without the consciousness of a principle of immortality in the human soul, Man could never have had awakened in him the desire to live in the remembrance of his fellows: mere love, or the yearning of kind towards kind, could not have produced it. The dog or horse perishes in the field, or in the stall, by the side of his companions, and is incapable of anticipating the sorrow with which his surrounding associates shall bemoan his death, or pine for his loss; he cannot pre-conceive this regret, he can form no thought of it; and therefore cannot possibly have a desire to leave such regret or remembrance behind him. Add to the principle of love which exists in the inferior animals, the faculty of reason which exists in Man alone; will the conjunction of these account for the desire? Doubtless it is a necessary consequence of this conjunction; yet not I think as a direct result, but only to be come at

through an intermediate thought, viz. that of an intimation or assurance within us, that some part of our nature is imperishable. At least the precedence, in order of birth, of one feeling to the other, is unquestionable. If we look back upon the days of childhood, we shall find that the time is not in remembrance when, with respect to our own individual Being, the mind was without this assurance; whereas, the wish to be remembered by our friends or kindred after death, or even in absence, is, as we shall discover, a sensation that does not form itself till the social feelings have been developed, and the Reason has connected itself with a wide range of objects. Forlorn, and cut off from communication with the best part of his nature, must that man be, who should derive the sense of immortality, as it exists in the mind of a child, from the same unthinking gaiety or liveliness of animal spirits with which the lamb in the meadow, or any other irrational creature is endowed; who should ascribe it, in short, to blank ignorance in the child; to an inability arising from the imperfect state of his faculties to come, in any point of his being, into contact with a notion of death; or to an unreflecting acquiescence in what had been instilled into him! Has such an unfold of the mysteries of nature, though he may have forgotten his former self, ever noticed the early, obstinate, and unappeasable inquisitiveness of children upon the subject of origination? This single fact proves outwardly the monstrosity of those suppositions: for, if we had no direct external testimony that the minds of very young children meditate feelingly upon death and immortality, these inquiries, which we all know they are perpetually making concerning the *whence*, do necessarily include correspondent habits of interrogation concerning the *whither*. Origin and tendency are notions inseparably co-relative. Never did a child stand by the side of a running stream, pondering within himself what power was the feeder of the perpetual current, from what never-wearied sources the body of water was supplied, but he must have been inevitably propelled to follow this question by another: "Towards what abyss is it in progress? what receptacle can contain the mighty influx?" And the spirit of the answer must have been, though the word might be sea or ocean, accompanied perhaps with an image gathered from a map, or from the real object in nature—these might have been the *letter*, but the *spirit* of the answer must have been as inevitably,—a receptacle without bounds or dimensions;—nothing less than infinity. We may, then, be justified in asserting, that the sense of immortality, if not a co-existent and twin birth with Reason, is among the earliest of her offspring: and we may further assert, that from these conjoined, and under their countenance, the human affections are gradually formed and opened out. This is not the place to enter into the recesses of these investigations; but the subject requires me here to make a plain avowal, that, for my own part, it is to me inconceivable, that the sympathies of love towards each other, which grow with our growth, could ever attain any new strength, or even preserve the old, after we had received from the outward senses the impression of death, and were in the habit of having that impression daily renewed and its accompanying feeling brought home to ourselves, and to those we love; if the same were not counteracted by those communications with our internal Being, which are anterior to all these experiences, and with which revelation coincides, and has through that coincidence alone (for otherwise it could not possess it) a power to affect us. I confess, with me the conviction is absolute, that, if the impression and sense of death were not thus counterbalanced, such a hollowness would pervade the whole system of things, such a want of correspondence and consistency, a disproportion so astounding betwixt means and ends, that there could be no repose, no joy. Were we to grow up unfostered by this genial warmth, a frost would chill the

spirit, so penetrating and powerful, that there could be no motions of the life of love; and infinitely less could we have any wish to be remembered after we had passed away from a world in which each man had moved about like a shadow.—If, then, in a creature endowed with the faculties of foresight and reason, the social affections could not have unfolded themselves uncountenanced by the faith that Man is an immortal being; and if, consequently, neither could the individual dying have had a desire to survive in the remembrance of his fellows, nor on their side could they have felt a wish to preserve for future times vestiges of the departed; it follows, as a final inference, that without the belief in immortality, wherein these several desires originate, neither monuments nor epitaphs, in affectionate or laudatory commemoration of the deceased, could have existed in the world.

Simonides, it is related, upon landing in a strange country, found the corpse of an unknown person lying by the sea-side; he buried it, and was honoured throughout Greece for the piety of that act. Another ancient Philosopher, chancing to fix his eyes upon a dead body, regarded the same with slight, if not with contempt; saying, "See the shell of the flown bird!" But it is not to be supposed that the moral and tender-hearted Simonides was incapable of the lofty movements of thought, to which that other Sage gave way at the moment while his soul was intent only upon the indestructible being; nor, on the other hand, that he, in whose sight a lifeless human body was of no more value than the worthless shell from which the living fowl had departed, would not, in a different mood of mind, have been affected by those earthly considerations which had incited the philosophic Poet to the performance of that pious duty. And with regard to this latter we may be assured that, if he had been destitute of the capability of communing with the more exalted thoughts that appertain to human nature, he would have cared no more for the corpse of the stranger than for the dead body of a seal or porpoise which might have been cast up by the waves. We respect the corporeal frame of Man, not merely because it is the habitation of a rational, but of an immortal Soul. Each of these Sages was in sympathy with the best feelings of our nature; feelings which, though they seem opposite to each other, have another and a finer connection than that of contrast.—It is a connection formed through the subtle progress by which, both in the natural and the moral world, qualities pass insensibly into their contraries, and things revolve upon each other. As, in sailing upon the orb of this planet, a voyage towards the regions where the sun sets, conducts gradually to the quarter where we have been accustomed to behold it come forth at its rising; and, in like manner, a voyage towards the east, the birth-place in our imagination of the morning, leads finally to the quarter where the sun is last seen when he departs from our eyes; so the contemplative Soul, travelling in the direction of mortality, advances to the country of everlasting life; and, in like manner, may she continue to explore those cheerful tracts, till she is brought back, for her advantage and benefit, to the land of transitory things—of sorrow and of tears.

On a midway point, therefore, which commands the thoughts and feelings of the two Sages whom we have represented in contrast, does the Author of that species of composition, the laws of which it is our present purpose to explain, take his stand. Accordingly, recurring to the twofold desire of guarding the remains of the deceased and preserving their memory, it may be said that a sepulchral monument is a tribute to a man as a human being; and that an epitaph (in the ordinary meaning attached to the word) includes this general feeling and something more; and is a record to preserve the memory of the dead, as a tribute due to his individual worth, for a satisfaction to the sorrowing hearts

of the survivors, and for the common benefit of the living : which record is to be accomplished, not in a general manner, but, where it can, in close connection with the *bodily remains of the deceased* : and these, it may be added, among the modern nations of Europe, are deposited within, or contiguous to, their places of worship. In ancient times, as is well known, it was the custom to bury the dead beyond the walls of towns and cities ; and among the Greeks and Romans they were frequently interred by the way-sides.

I could here pause with pleasure, and invite the Reader to indulge with me in contemplation of the advantages which must have attended such a practice. We might ruminate upon the beauty which the monuments, thus placed, must have borrowed from the surrounding images of nature—from the trees, the wild flowers, from a stream running perhaps within sight or hearing, from the beaten road stretching its weary length hard by. Many tender similitudes must these objects have presented to the mind of the traveller leaning upon one of the tombs, or reposing in the coolness of its shade, whether he had halted from weariness or in compliance with the invitation, 'Pause, Traveller!' so often found upon the monuments. And to its epitaph also must have been supplied strong appeals to visible appearances or immediate impressions, lively and affecting analogies of life as a journey—death as a sleep overcoming the tired wayfarer—of misfortune as a storm that falls suddenly upon him—of beauty as a flower that passeth away, or of innocent pleasure as one that may be gathered—of virtue that standeth firm as a rock against the beating waves ;—of hope 'undimmed insensibly like the poplar by the side of the river that has fed it,' or blasted in a moment like a pine-tree by the stroke of lightning upon the mountain-top—of admonitions and heart-stirring remembrances, like a refreshing breeze that comes without warning, or the taste of the waters of an unexpected fountain. These, and similar suggestions, must have given, formerly, to the language of the senseless stone a voice enforced and endeared by the benignity of that nature with which it was in unison.—We, in modern times, have lost much of these advantages ; and they are but in a small degree counterbalanced to the inhabitants of large towns and cities, by the custom of depositing the dead within, or contiguous to, their places of worship ; however splendid or imposing may be the appearance of those edifices, or however interesting or salutary the recollections associated with them. Even were it not true that tombs lose their monitory virtue when thus obtruded upon the notice of men occupied with the cares of the world, and too often sullied and defiled by those cares, yet still, when death is in our thoughts, nothing can make amends for the want of the soothing influences of nature, and for the absence of those types of renovation and decay, which the fields and woods offer to the notice of the serious and contemplative mind. To feel the force of this sentiment, let a man only compare in imagination the unsightly manner in which our monuments are crowded together in the busy, noisy, unclean, and almost grassless church-yard of a large town, with the still seclusion of a Turkish cemetery, in some remote place ; and yet further sanctified by the grove of cypress in which it is embosomed. Thoughts in the same temper as these have already been expressed with true sensibility by an ingenious Poet of the present day. The subject of his poem is "All Saints Church, Derby:" he has been deploring the forbidding and unseemly appearance of its burial-ground, and uttering a wish, that in past times the practice had been adopted of interring the inhabitants of large towns in the country.—

'Then in some rural, calm, sequestered spot,
Where healing Nature her benignant look
Ne'er changes, save at that lorn season, when,

With tresses drooping o'er her sable stole,
She yearly mourns the mortal doom of man,
Her noblest work, (so Israel's virgins erst,
With annual moan upon the mountains wept
Their fairest gone,) there in that rural scene,
So placid, so congenial to the wish
The Christian feels, of peaceful rest within
The silent grave, I would have stayed :

—wandered forth, where the cold dew of heaven
Lay on the humbler graves around, what time
The pale moon gazed upon the turfy mounds,
Pensive, as though like me, in lonely muse,
'Twere brooding on the dead inhumed beneath.
There while with him, the holy man of Uz,
O'er human destiny I sympathised,
Counting the long, long periods prophecy
Decrees to roll, ere the great day arrives
Of resurrection, oft the blue-eyed Spring
Had met me with her blossoms, as the Dove,
Of old, returned with olive leaf, to cheer
The Patriarch mourning o'er a world destroyed :
And I would bless her visit ; for to me
'Tis sweet to trace the consonance that links
As one, the works of Nature and the word
Of God.'—

JOHN EDWARDS.

A village church-yard, lying as it does in the lap of nature, may indeed be most favourably contrasted with that of a town of crowded population ; and sepulture therein combines many of the best tendencies which belong to the mode practised by the Ancients, with others peculiar to itself. The sensations of pious cheerfulness, which attend the celebration of the sabbath-day in rural places, are profitably chastised by the sight of the graves of kindred and friends, gathered together in that general home towards which the thoughtful yet happy spectators themselves are journeying. Hence a parish-church, in the stillness of the country, is a visible centre of a community of the living and the dead ; a point to which are habitually referred the nearest concerns of both.

As, then, both in cities and in villages, the dead are deposited in close connection with our places of worship, with us the composition of an epitaph naturally turns, still more than among the nations of antiquity, upon the most serious and solemn affections of the human mind ; upon departed worth—upon personal or social sorrow and admiration—upon religion, individual and social—upon time, and upon eternity. Accordingly, it suffices, in ordinary cases, to secure a composition of this kind from censure, that it contain nothing that shall shock or be inconsistent with this spirit. But, to entitle an epitaph to praise, more than this is necessary. It ought to contain some thought or feeling belonging to the mortal or immortal part of our nature touchingly expressed ; and if that be done, however general or even trite the sentiment may be, every man of pure mind will read the words with pleasure and gratitude. A husband bewails a wife ; a parent breathes a sigh of disappointed hope over a lost child ; a son utters a sentiment of filial reverence for a departed father or mother ; a friend perhaps inscribes an encomium recording the companionable qualities, or the solid virtues, of the tenant of the grave, whose departure has left a sadness upon his memory. This and a pious admonition to the living, and a humble expression of Christian confidence in immortality, is the language of a thousand church-yards ; and it does not often happen that anything, in a greater degree discriminate or appropriate to the dead or to the living, is to be found in them. This want of discrimination has been ascribed by Dr. Johnson, in his Essay upon the epitaphs of Pope, to two causes ; first, the scantiness of the objects of human praise ; and, secondly, the want

of variety in the characters of men; or, to use his own words, 'to the fact, that the greater part of mankind have no character at all.' Such language may be holden without blame among the generalities of common conversation; but does not become a critic and a moralist speaking seriously upon a serious subject. The objects of admiration in human-nature are not scanty, but abundant: and every man has a character of his own, to the eye that has skill to perceive it. The real cause of the acknowledged want of discrimination in sepulchral memorialis this: That to analyse the characters of others, especially of those whom we love, is not a common or natural employment of men at any time. We are not anxious unerringly to understand the constitution of the minds of those who have soothed, who have cheered, who have supported us: with whom we have been long and daily pleased or delighted. The affections are their own justification. The light of love in our hearts is a satisfactory evidence that there is a body of worth in the minds of our friends or kindred, whence that light has proceeded. We shrink from the thought of placing their merits and defects to be weighed against each other in the nice balance of pure intellect; nor do we find much temptation to detect the shades by which a good quality or virtue is discriminated in them from an excellence known by the same general name as it exists in the mind of another; and, least of all, do we incline to these refinements when under the pressure of sorrow, admiration, or regret, or when actuated by any of those feelings which incite men to prolong the memory of their friends and kindred, by records placed in the bosom of the all-uniting and equalising receptacle of the dead.

The first requisite, then, in an Epitaph is, that it should speak, in a tone which shall sink into the heart, the general language of humanity as connected with the subject of death—the source from which an epitaph proceeds—of death, and of life. To be born and to die are the two points in which all men feel themselves to be in absolute coincidence. This general language may be uttered so strikingly as to entitle an epitaph to high praise; yet it cannot lay claim to the highest unless other excellencies be superadded. Passing through all intermediate steps, we will attempt to determine at once what these excellencies are, and wherein consists the perfection of this species of composition.—It will be found to lie in a due proportion of the common or universal feeling of humanity to sensations excited by a distinct and clear conception, conveyed to the reader's mind, of the individual, whose death is deplored and whose memory is to be preserved; at least of his character as, after death, it appeared to those who loved him and lament his loss. The general sympathy ought to be quickened, provoked, and diversified, by particular thoughts, actions, images,—circumstances of age, occupation, manner of life, prosperity which the deceased had known, or adversity to which he had been subject; and these ought to be bound together and solemnised into one harmony by the general sympathy. The two powers should temper, restrain, and exalt each other. The reader ought to know who and what the man was whom he is called upon to think of with interest. A distinct conception should be given (implicitly where it can, rather than explicitly) of the individual lamented.—But the writer of an epitaph is not an anatomist, who dissects the internal frame of the mind; he is not even a painter, who executes a portrait at leisure and in entire tranquillity: his delineation, we must remember, is performed by the side of the grave; and, what is more, the grave of one whom he loves and admires. What purity and brightness is that virtue clothed in, the image of which must no longer bless our living eyes! The character of a deceased friend or beloved kinsman is not seen, no—nor ought to be seen, otherwise than as a tree through a tender haze or a luminous mist, that spiritualises and beautifies it; that takes away, indeed, but

only to the end that the parts which are not abstracted may appear more dignified and lovely; may impress and affect the more. Shall we say, then, that this is not truth, not a faithful image; and that, accordingly, the purposes of commemoration cannot be answered?—It is truth, and of the highest order; for, though doubtless things are not apparent which did exist; yet, the object being looked at through this medium, parts and proportions are brought into distinct view which before had been only imperfectly or unconsciously seen: it is truth hallowed by love—the joint offspring of the worth of the dead and the affections of the living! This may easily be brought to the test. Let one, whose eyes have been sharpened by personal hostility to discover what was amiss in the character of a good man, hear the tidings of his death, and what a change is wrought in a moment! Enmity melts away; and, as it disappears, unsightliness, disproportion, and deformity, vanish; and, through the influence of commiseration, a harmony of love and beauty succeeds. Bring such a man to the tombstone on which shall be inscribed an epitaph on his adversary, composed in the spirit which we have recommended. Would he turn from it as from an idle tale? No;—the thoughtful look, the sigh, and perhaps the involuntary tear, would testify that it had a sane, a generous, and good meaning; and that on the writer's mind had remained an impression which was a true abstract of the character of the deceased; that his gifts and graces were remembered in the simplicity in which they ought to be remembered. The composition and quality of the mind of a virtuous man, contemplated by the side of the grave where his body is mouldering, ought to appear, and be felt as something midway between what he was on earth walking about with his living frailties, and what he may be presumed to be as a Spirit in heaven.

It suffices, therefore, that the trunk and the main branches of the worth of the deceased be boldly and unaffectedly represented. Any further detail, minutely and scrupulously pursued, especially if this be done with laborious and antithetic discriminations, must inevitably frustrate its own purpose; forcing the passing Spectator to this conclusion,—either that the dead did not possess the merits ascribed to him, or that they who have raised a monument to his memory, and must therefore be supposed to have been closely connected with him, were incapable of perceiving those merits; or at least during the act of composition had lost sight of them; for, the understanding having been so busy in its petty occupation, how could the heart of the mourner be other than cold? and in either of these cases, whether the fault be on the part of the buried person or the survivors, the memorial is unaffecting and profitless.

Much better is it to fall short in discrimination than to pursue it too far, or to labour it unfeelingly. For in no place are we so much disposed to dwell upon those points, of nature and condition, wherein all men resemble each other, as in the temple where the universal Father is worshipped, or by the side of the grave which gathers all human Beings to itself, and 'equalises the lofty and the low.' We suffer and we weep with the same heart; we love and are anxious for one another in one spirit; our hopes look to the same quarter; and the virtues by which we are all to be furthered and supported, as patience, meekness, good-will, justice, temperance, and temperate desires, are in an equal degree the concern of us all. Let an Epitaph, then, contain at least these acknowledgments to our common nature; nor let the sense of their importance be sacrificed to a balance of opposite qualities or minute distinctions in individual character; which if they do not, (as will for the most part be the case,) when examined, resolve themselves into a trick of words, will, even when they are true and just, for the most part be grievously out of place; for, as it is probable that few only have explored

these intricacies of human nature, so can the tracing of them be interesting only to a few. But an epitaph is not a proud writing shut up for the studious : it is exposed to all—to the wise and the most ignorant ; it is condescending, perspicuous, and lovingly solicits regard ; its story and admonitions are brief, that the thoughtless, the busy, and indolent, may not be deterred, nor the impatient tired : the stooping old man cons the engraven record like a second horn-book ;—the child is proud that he can read it ;—and the stranger is introduced through its mediation to the company of a friend : it is concerning all, and for all ;—in the church-yard it is open to the day ; the sun looks down upon the stone, and the rains of heaven beat against it.

Yet, though the writer who would excite sympathy is bound in this case, more than in any other, to give proof that he himself has been moved, it is to be remembered, that to raise a monument is a sober and a reflective act ; that the inscription which it bears is intended to be permanent, and for universal perusal ; and that, for this reason, the thoughts and feelings expressed should be permanent also—liberated from that weakness and anguish of sorrow which is in nature transitory, and which with instinctive decency retires from notice. The passions should be subdued, the emotions controlled ; strong, indeed, but nothing ungovernable or wholly involuntary. Seemliness requires this, and truth requires it also : for how can the narrator otherwise be trusted ? Moreover, a grave is a tranquillising object : resignation in course of time springs up from it as naturally as the wild flowers, besprinkling the turf with which it may be covered, or gathering round the monument by which it is defended. The very form and substance of the monument which has received the inscription, and the appearance of the letters, testifying with what a slow and laborious hand they must have been engraven, might seem to reproach the author who had given way upon this occasion to transports of mind, or to quick turns of conflicting passion ; though the same might constitute the life and beauty of a funeral oration or elegiac poem.

These sensations and judgments, acted upon perhaps unconsciously, have been one of the main causes why epitaphs so often personate the deceased, and represent him as speaking from his own tomb-stone. The departed Mortal is introduced telling you himself that his pains are gone ; that a state of rest is come ; and he conjures you to weep for him no longer. He admonishes with the voice of one experienced in the vanity of those affections which are confined to earthly objects, and gives a verdict like a superior Being, performing the office of a judge, who has no temptations to mislead him, and whose decision cannot but be dispassionate. Thus is death disarmed of its sting, and affliction unsubstantialised. By this tender fiction, the survivors bind themselves to a sedater sorrow, and employ the intervention of the imagination in order that the reason may speak her own language earlier than she would otherwise have been enabled to do. This shadowy interposition also harmoniously unites the two worlds of the living and the dead by their appropriate affections. And it may be observed, that here we have an additional proof of the propriety with which sepulchral inscriptions were referred to the consciousness of immortality as their primal source.

I do not speak with a wish to recommend that an epitaph should be cast in this mould preferably to the still more common one, in which what is said comes from the survivors directly ; but rather to point out how natural those feelings are which have induced men, in all states and ranks of society, so frequently to adopt this mode. And this I have done chiefly in order that the laws, which ought to govern the composition of the other, may be better understood. This latter mode, namely, that in which the survivors speak in their own persons, seems to me upon the whole greatly preferable : as it

admits a wider range of notices ; and, above all, because, excluding the fiction which is the groundwork of the other, it rests upon a more solid basis.

Enough has been said to convey our notion of a perfect epitaph ; but it must be borne in mind that one is meant which will best answer the *general* ends of that species of composition. According to the course pointed out, the worth of private life, through all varieties of situation and character, will be most honourably and profitably preserved in memory. Nor would the model recommended less suit public men, in all instances save of those persons who by the greatness of their services in the employments of peace or war, or by the surpassing excellence of their works in art, literature, or science, have made themselves not only universally known, but have filled the heart of their country with everlasting gratitude. Yet I must here pause to correct myself. In describing the general tenour of thought which epitaphs ought to hold, I have omitted to say, that if it be the *actions* of a man, or even some *one* conspicuous or beneficial act of local or general utility, which have distinguished him, and excited a desire that he should be remembered, then, of course, ought the attention to be directed chiefly to those actions or that act : and such sentiments dwelt upon as naturally arise out of them or it. Having made this necessary distinction, I proceed.—The mighty benefactors of mankind, as they are not only known by the immediate survivors, but will continue to be known familiarly to latest posterity, do not stand in need of biographic sketches, in such a place ; nor of delineations of character to individualise them. This is already done by their Works, in the memories of men. Their naked names, and a grand comprehensive sentiment of civic gratitude, patriotic love, or human admiration—or the utterance of some elementary principle most essential in the constitution of true virtue ;—or a declaration touching that pious humility and self-abasement, which are ever most profound as minds are most susceptible of genuine exaltation—or an intuition, communicated in adequate words, of the sublimity of intellectual power ;—these are the only tribute which can here be paid—the only offering that upon such an altar would not be unworthy.

'What needs my Shakspeare for his honoured bones
The labour of an age in piled stones,
Or that his hallowed reliques should be hid
Under a star-pointing pyramid ?
Dear Son of Memory, great Heir of Fame,
What need'st thou such weak witness of thy name ?
Thou in our wonder and astonishment
Hast built thyself a livelong monument,
And so sepulchred, in such pomp dost lie,
That kings for such a tomb would wish to die.'

Page 580.

'And spires whose 'silent finger points to Heaven.'

An instinctive taste teaches men to build their churches in flat countries with spire-steeples, which as they cannot be referred to any other object, point as with silent finger to the sky and stars, and sometimes, when they reflect the brazen light of a rich though rainy sunset, appear like a pyramid of flame burning heaven-ward. See "The Friend," by S. T. Coleridge, No. 14, p. 223.

Page 598.

'That Sycamore, which annually holds
Within its shade as in a stately tent.'

'This Sycamore oft musical with Bees ;
Such Tents the Patriarchs loved.'

S. T. Coleridge.

Page 602.

'Perish the roses and the flowers of Kings.'

The 'Transit gloria mundi' is finely expressed in the Introduction to the Foundation-charters of some of the ancient Abbeys. Some expressions here used are taken from that of the Abbey of St. Mary's, Furness, the translation of which is as follows:—

'Considering every day the uncertainty of life, that the roses and flowers of Kings, Emperors, and Dukes, and the crowns and palms of all the great, wither and decay; and that all things, with an uninterrupted course, tend to dissolution and death: I therefore,' &c.

Page 604.

— *'Earth has lent
Her waters, Air her breezes.'*

In treating this subject, it was impossible not to recollect, with gratitude, the pleasing picture, which, in his

Poem of the Fleece, the excellent and amiable Dyer has given of the influences of manufacturing industry upon the face of this Island. He wrote at a time when machinery was first beginning to be introduced, and his benevolent heart prompted him to augur from it nothing but good. Truth has compelled me to dwell upon the baneful effects arising out of an ill-regulated and excessive application of powers so admirable in themselves.

Page 612.

'Binding herself by Statute.'

The discovery of Dr. Bell affords marvellous facilities for carrying this into effect; and it is impossible to overrate the benefit which might accrue to humanity from the universal application of this simple engine under an enlightened and conscientious government.

APPENDIX, PREFACES,

ETC. ETC.

MUCH the greatest part of the foregoing Poems has been so long before the Public that no prefatory matter, explanatory of any portion of them, or of the arrangement which has been adopted, appears to be required; and had it not been for the observations contained in those Prefaces upon the principles of Poetry in general they would not have been reprinted even as an Appendix in this Edition.

PREFACE

TO THE SECOND EDITION OF SEVERAL OF THE FOREGOING POEMS, PUBLISHED, WITH AN ADDITIONAL VOLUME, UNDER THE TITLE OF "LYRICAL BALLADS."

[*Note.*—In succeeding Editions, when the Collection was much enlarged and diversified, this Preface was transferred to the end of the Volumes as having little of a special application to their contents.]

THE first Volume of these Poems has already been submitted to general perusal. It was published, as an experiment, which, I hoped, might be of some use to ascertain, how far, by fitting to metrical arrangement a selection of the real language of men in a state of vivid sensation, that sort of pleasure and that quantity of pleasure may be imparted, which a Poet may rationally endeavour to impart.

I had formed no very inaccurate estimate of the probable effect of those Poems: I flattered myself that they who should be pleased with them would read them with more than common pleasure: and, on the other hand, I was well aware, that by those who should dislike them, they would be read with more than common dislike. The result has differed from my expectation in this only, that a greater number have been pleased than I ventured to hope I should please.

* * * * *

Several of my Friends are anxious for the success of these Poems, from a belief, that, if the views with which they were composed were indeed realised, a class of Poetry would be produced, well adapted to interest mankind permanently, and not unimportant in the quality, and in the multiplicity

of its moral relations: and on this account they have advised me to prefix a systematic defence of the theory upon which the Poems were written. But I was unwilling to undertake the task, knowing that on this occasion the Reader would look coldly upon my arguments, since I might be suspected of having been principally influenced by the selfish and foolish hope of *reasoning* him into an approbation of these particular Poems: and I was still more unwilling to undertake the task, because, adequately to display the opinions, and fully to enforce the arguments, would require a space wholly disproportionate to a preface. For, to treat the subject with the clearness and coherence of which it is susceptible, it would be necessary to give a full account of the present state of the public taste in this country, and to determine how far this taste is healthy or depraved; which, again, could not be determined, without pointing out in what manner language and the human mind act and re-act on each other, and without retracing the revolutions, not of literature alone, but likewise of society itself. I have therefore altogether declined to enter regularly upon this defence; yet I am sensible, that there would be something like impro-

priety in abruptly obtruding upon the Public, without a few words of introduction, Poems so materially different from those upon which general approbation is at present bestowed.

It is supposed, that by the act of writing in verse an Author makes a formal engagement that he will gratify certain known habits of association; that he not only thus apprises the Reader that certain classes of ideas and expressions will be found in his book, but that others will be carefully excluded. This exponent or symbol held forth by metrical language must in different eras of literature have excited very different expectations: for example, in the age of Catullus, Terence, and Lucretius, and that of Statius or Claudian; and in our own country, in the age of Shakspeare and Beaumont and Fletcher, and that of Donne and Cowley, or Dryden, or Pope. I will not take upon me to determine the exact import of the promise which, by the act of writing in verse, an Author, in the present day makes to his reader: but it will undoubtedly appear to many persons that I have not fulfilled the terms of an engagement thus voluntarily contracted. They who have been accustomed to the gaudiness and inane phraseology of many modern writers, if they persist in reading this book to its conclusion, will, no doubt, frequently have to struggle with feelings of strangeness and awkwardness: they will look round for poetry, and will be induced to inquire by what species of courtesy these attempts can be permitted to assume that title. I hope therefore the reader will not censure me for attempting to state what I have proposed to myself to perform; and also (as far as the limits of a preface will permit) to explain some of the chief reasons which have determined me in the choice of my purpose: that at least he may be spared any unpleasant feeling of disappointment, and that I myself may be protected from one of the most dishonourable accusations which can be brought against an Author; namely, that of an indolence which prevents him from endeavouring to ascertain what is his duty, or, when his duty is ascertained, prevents him from performing it.

The principal object, then, proposed in these Poems was to choose incidents and situations from common life, and to relate or describe them, throughout, as far as was possible in a selection of language really used by men, and, at the same time, to throw over them a certain colouring of imagination, whereby ordinary things should be presented to the mind in an unusual aspect; and, further, and above all, to make these incidents and situations interesting by tracing in them, truly though not

ostentatiously, the primary laws of our nature: chiefly, as far as regards the manner in which we associate ideas in a state of excitement. Humble and rustic life was generally chosen, because, in that condition, the essential passions of the heart find a better soil in which they can attain their maturity, are less under restraint, and speak a plainer and more emphatic language; because in that condition of life our elementary feelings co-exist in a state of greater simplicity, and, consequently, may be more accurately contemplated, and more forcibly communicated; because the manners of rural life germinate from those elementary feelings, and, from the necessary character of rural occupations, are more easily comprehended, and are more durable; and, lastly, because in that condition the passions of men are incorporated with the beautiful and permanent forms of nature. The language, too, of these men has been adopted (purified indeed from what appear to be its real defects, from all lasting and rational causes of dislike or disgust) because such men hourly communicate with the best objects from which the best part of language is originally derived; and because, from their rank in society and the sameness and narrow circle of their intercourse, being less under the influence of social vanity, they convey their feelings and notions in simple and unelaborated expressions. Accordingly, such a language, arising out of repeated experience and regular feelings, is a more permanent, and a far more philosophical language, than that which is frequently substituted for it by Poets, who think that they are conferring honour upon themselves and their art, in proportion as they separate themselves from the sympathies of men, and indulge in arbitrary and capricious habits of expression, in order to furnish food for fickle tastes, and fickle appetites, of their own creation*.

I cannot, however, be insensible to the present outcry against the triviality and meanness, both of thought and language, which some of my contemporaries have occasionally introduced into their metrical compositions; and I acknowledge that this defect, where it exists, is more dishonourable to the Writer's own character than false refinement or arbitrary innovation, though I should contend at the same time, that it is far less pernicious in the sum of its consequences. From such verses the Poems in these volumes will be

* It is worth while here to observe, that the affecting parts of Chaucer are almost always expressed in language pure and universally intelligible even to this day.

found distinguished at least by one mark of difference, that each of them has a worthy *purpose*. Not that I always began to write with a distinct purpose formally conceived; but habits of meditation have, I trust, so prompted and regulated my feelings, that my descriptions of such objects as strongly excite those feelings, will be found to carry along with them a *purpose*. If this opinion be erroneous, I can have little right to the name of a Poet. For all good poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: and though this be true, Poems to which any value can be attached were never produced on any variety of subjects but by a man who, being possessed of more than usual organic sensibility, had also thought long and deeply. For our continued influxes of feeling are modified and directed by our thoughts, which are indeed the representatives of all our past feelings; and, as by contemplating the relation of these general representatives to each other, we discover what is really important to men, so, by the repetition and continuance of this act, our feelings will be connected with important subjects, till at length, if we be originally possessed of much sensibility, such habits of mind will be produced, that, by obeying blindly and mechanically the impulses of those habits, we shall describe objects, and utter sentiments, of such a nature, and in such connection with each other, that the understanding of the Reader must necessarily be in some degree enlightened, and his affections strengthened and purified.

It has been said that each of these poems has a purpose. Another circumstance must be mentioned which distinguishes these Poems from the popular Poetry of the day; it is this, that the feeling therein developed gives importance to the action and situation, and not the action and situation to the feeling.

A sense of false modesty shall not prevent me from asserting, that the Reader's attention is pointed to this mark of distinction, far less for the sake of these particular Poems than from the general importance of the subject. The subject is indeed important! For the human mind is capable of being excited without the application of gross and violent stimulants; and he must have a very faint perception of its beauty and dignity who does not know this, and who does not further know, that one being is elevated above another, in proportion as he possesses this capability. It has therefore appeared to me, that to endeavour to produce or enlarge this capability is one of the best services in which, at any period, a Writer can be engaged;

but this service, excellent at all times, is especially so at the present day. For a multitude of causes, unknown to former times, are now acting with a combined force to blunt the discriminating powers of the mind, and, unfitting it for all voluntary exertion, to reduce it to a state of almost savage torpor. The most effective of these causes are the great national events which are daily taking place, and the increasing accumulation of men in cities, where the uniformity of their occupations produces a craving for extraordinary incident, which the rapid communication of intelligence hourly gratifies. To this tendency of life and manners the literature and theatrical exhibitions of the country have conformed themselves. The invaluable works of our elder writers, I had almost said the works of Shakspeare and Milton, are driven into neglect by frantic novels, sickly and stupid German Tragedies, and deluges of idle and extravagant stories in verse.—When I think upon this degrading thirst after outrageous stimulation, I am almost ashamed to have spoken of the feeble endeavour made in these volumes to counteract it; and, reflecting upon the magnitude of the general evil, I should be oppressed with no dishonourable melancholy, had I not a deep impression of certain inherent and indestructible qualities of the human mind, and likewise of certain powers in the great and permanent objects that act upon it, which are equally inherent and indestructible; and were there not added to this impression a belief, that the time is approaching when the evil will be systematically opposed, by men of greater powers, and with far more distinguished success.

Having dwelt thus long on the subjects and aim of these Poems, I shall request the Reader's permission to apprise him of a few circumstances relating to their *style*, in order, among other reasons, that he may not censure me for not having performed what I never attempted. The Reader will find that personifications of abstract ideas rarely occur in these volumes; and are utterly rejected, as an ordinary device to elevate the style, and raise it above prose. My purpose was to imitate, and, as far as is possible, to adopt the very language of men; and assuredly such personifications do not make any natural or regular part of that language. They are, indeed, a figure of speech occasionally prompted by passion, and I have made use of them as such; but have endeavoured utterly to reject them as a mechanical device of style, or as a family language which Writers in metre seem to lay claim to by prescription. I have wished to keep the Reader in the company of flesh and blood,

persuaded that by so doing I shall interest him. Others who pursue a different track will interest him likewise; I do not interfere with their claim, but wish to prefer a claim of my own. There will also be found in these volumes little of what is usually called poetic diction; as much pains has been taken to avoid it as is ordinarily taken to produce it; this has been done for the reason already alleged, to bring my language near to the language of men; and further, because the pleasure which I have proposed to myself to impart, is of a kind very different from that which is supposed by many persons to be the proper object of poetry. Without being culpably particular, I do not know how to give my Reader a more exact notion of the style in which it was my wish and intention to write, than by informing him that I have at all times endeavoured to look steadily at my subject; consequently, there is I hope in these Poems little falsehood of description, and my ideas are expressed in language fitted to their respective importance. Something must have been gained by this practice, as it is friendly to one property of all good poetry, namely, good sense: but it has necessarily cut me off from a large portion of phrases and figures of speech which from father to son have long been regarded as the common inheritance of Poets. I have also thought it expedient to restrict myself still further, having abstained from the use of many expressions, in themselves proper and beautiful, but which have been foolishly repeated by bad Poets, till such feelings of disgust are connected with them as it is scarcely possible by any art of association to overpower.

If in a poem there should be found a series of lines, or even a single line, in which the language, though naturally arranged, and according to the strict laws of metre, does not differ from that of prose, there is a numerous class of critics, who, when they stumble upon these prosaisms, as they call them, imagine that they have made a notable discovery, and exult over the Poet as over a man ignorant of his own profession. Now these men would establish a canon of criticism which the Reader will conclude he must utterly reject, if he wishes to be pleased with these volumes. And it would be a most easy task to prove to him, that not only the language of a large portion of every good poem, even of the most elevated character, must necessarily, except with reference to the metre, in no respect differ from that of good prose, but likewise that some of the most interesting parts of the best poems will be found to be strictly the language of prose when prose is well written. The

truth of this assertion might be demonstrated by innumerable passages from almost all the poetical writings, even of Milton himself. To illustrate the subject in a general manner, I will here adduce a short composition of Gray, who was at the head of those who, by their reasonings, have attempted to widen the space of separation betwixt Prose and Metrical composition, and was more than any other man curiously elaborate in the structure of his own poetic diction.

'In vain to me the smiling mornings shine,
And reddening Phœbus lifts his golden fire:
The birds in vain their amorous descent join,
Or cheerful fields resume their green attire.
These ears, alas! for other notes repine;
A different object do these eyes require,
My lonely anguish melts no heart but mine;
And in my breast the imperfect joys expire;
Yet morning smiles the busy race to cheer,
And new-born pleasure brings to happier men;
The fields to all their wonted tribute bear;
To warm their little loves the birds complain.
I fruitless mourn to him that cannot hear,
And weep the more because I weep in vain.'

It will easily be perceived, that the only part of this Sonnet which is of any value is the lines printed in Italics; it is equally obvious, that, except in the rhyme, and in the use of the single word 'fruitless' for fruitlessly, which is so far a defect, the language of these lines does in no respect differ from that of prose.

By the foregoing quotation it has been shown that the language of Prose may yet be well adapted to Poetry; and it was previously asserted, that a large portion of the language of every good poem can in no respect differ from that of good Prose. We will go further. It may be safely affirmed, that there neither is, nor can be, any *essential* difference between the language of prose and metrical composition. We are fond of tracing the resemblance between Poetry and Painting, and, accordingly, we call them Sisters; but where shall we find bonds of connection sufficiently strict to typify the affinity betwixt metrical and prose composition? They both speak by and to the same organs; the bodies in which both of them are clothed may be said to be of the same substance, their affections are kindred, and almost identical, not necessarily differing even in degree; Poetry * sheds no tears

* I here use the word 'Poetry' (though against my own judgment) as opposed to the word Prose, and synonymous with metrical composition. But much confusion has been introduced into criticism by this contradistinction of Poetry and Prose, instead of the more philosophical one of

'such as Angels weep,' but natural and human tears; she can boast of no celestial ichor that distinguishes her vital juices from those of prose; the same human blood circulates through the veins of them both.

If it be affirmed that rhyme and metrical arrangement of themselves constitute a distinction which overturns what has just been said on the strict affinity of metrical language with that of prose, and paves the way for other artificial distinctions which the mind voluntarily admits, I answer that the language of such Poetry as is here recommended is, as far as is possible, a selection of the language really spoken by men; that this selection, wherever it is made with true taste and feeling, will of itself form a distinction far greater than would at first be imagined, and will entirely separate the composition from the vulgarity and meanness of ordinary life; and, if metre be superadded thereto, I believe that a dissimilitude will be produced altogether sufficient for the gratification of a rational mind. What other distinction would we have? Whence is it to come? And where is it to exist? Not, surely, where the Poet speaks through the mouths of his characters: it cannot be necessary here, either for elevation of style, or any of its supposed ornaments: for, if the Poet's subject be judiciously chosen, it will naturally, and upon fit occasion, lead him to passions the language of which, if selected truly and judiciously, must necessarily be dignified and variegated, and alive with metaphors and figures. I forbear to speak of an incongruity which would shock the intelligent Reader, should the Poet interweave any foreign splendour of his own with that which the passion naturally suggests: it is sufficient to say that such addition is unnecessary. And, surely, it is more probable that those passages, which with propriety abound with metaphors and figures, will have their due effect, if, upon other occasions where the passions are of a milder character, the style also be subdued and temperate.

But, as the pleasure which I hope to give by the Poems now presented to the Reader must depend entirely on just notions upon this subject, and, as it is in itself of high importance to our taste and moral feelings, I cannot content

Poetry and Matter of Fact, or Science. The only strict antithesis to Prose is Metre; nor is this, in truth, a *strict* antithesis, because lines and passages of metre so naturally occur in writing prose, that it would be scarcely possible to avoid them, even were it desirable.

myself with these detached remarks. And if, in what I am about to say, it shall appear to some that my labour is unnecessary, and that I am like a man fighting a battle without enemies, such persons may be reminded, that, whatever be the language outwardly holden by men, a practical faith in the opinions which I am wishing to establish is almost unknown. If my conclusions are admitted, and carried as far as they must be carried if admitted at all, our judgments concerning the works of the greatest Poets both ancient and modern will be far different from what they are at present, both when we praise, and when we censure: and our moral feelings influencing and influenced by these judgments will, I believe, be corrected and purified.

Taking up the subject, then, upon general grounds, let me ask, what is meant by the word Poet? What is a Poet? To whom does he address himself? And what language is to be expected from him?—He is a man speaking to men: a man, it is true, endowed with more lively sensibility, more enthusiasm and tenderness, who has a greater knowledge of human nature, and a more comprehensive soul, than are supposed to be common among mankind; a man pleased with his own passions and volitions, and who rejoices more than other men in the spirit of life that is in him; delighting to contemplate similar volitions and passions as manifested in the goings-on of the Universe, and habitually impelled to create them where he does not find them. To these qualities he has added a disposition to be affected more than other men by absent things as if they were present; an ability of conjuring up in himself passions, which are indeed far from being the same as those produced by real events, yet (especially in those parts of the general sympathy which are pleasing and delightful) do more nearly resemble the passions produced by real events, than any thing which, from the motions of their own minds merely, other men are accustomed to feel in themselves:—whence, and from practice, he has acquired a greater readiness and power in expressing what he thinks and feels, and especially those thoughts and feelings which, by his own choice, or from the structure of his own mind, arise in him without immediate external excitement.

But whatever portion of this faculty we may suppose even the greatest Poet to possess, there cannot be a doubt that the language which it will suggest to him, must often, in liveliness and truth, fall short of that which is uttered by men in real life, under the actual pressure of those passions,

certain shadows of which the Poet thus produces, or feels to be produced, in himself.

However exalted a notion we would wish to cherish of the character of a Poet, it is obvious, that while he describes and imitates passions, his employment is in some degree mechanical, compared with the freedom and power of real and substantial action and suffering. So that it will be the wish of the Poet to bring his feelings near to those of the persons whose feelings he describes, nay, for short spaces of time, perhaps, to let himself slip into an entire delusion, and even confound and identify his own feelings with theirs; modifying only the language which is thus suggested to him by a consideration that he describes for a particular purpose, that of giving pleasure. Here, then, he will apply the principle of selection which has been already insisted upon. He will depend upon this for removing what would otherwise be painful or disgusting in the passion; he will feel that there is no necessity to trick out or to elevate nature: and, the more industriously he applies this principle, the deeper will be his faith that no words, which *his* fancy or imagination can suggest, will be to be compared with those which are the emanations of reality and truth.

But it may be said by those who do not object to the general spirit of these remarks, that, as it is impossible for the Poet to produce upon all occasions language as exquisitely fitted for the passion as that which the real passion itself suggests, it is proper that he should consider himself as in the situation of a translator, who does not scruple to substitute excellencies of another kind for those which are unattainable by him; and endeavours occasionally to surpass his original, in order to make some amends for the general inferiority to which he feels that he must submit. But this would be to encourage idleness and unmanly despair. Further, it is the language of men who speak of what they do not understand; who talk of Poetry as of a matter of amusement and idle pleasure; who will converse with us as gravely about a *taste* for Poetry, as they express it, as if it were a thing as indifferent as a taste for rope-dancing, or Frontinac or Sherry. Aristotle, I have been told, has said, that Poetry is the most philosophic of all writing: it is so: its object is truth, not individual and local, but general, and operative; not standing upon external testimony, but carried alive into the heart by passion; truth which is its own testimony, which gives competence and confidence to the tribunal to which it appeals, and receives them from the same tribunal.

Poetry is the image of man and nature. The obstacles which stand in the way of the fidelity of the Biographer and Historian, and of their consequent utility, are incalculably greater than those which are to be encountered by the Poet who comprehends the dignity of his art. The Poet writes under one restriction only, namely, the necessity of giving immediate pleasure to a human Being possessed of that information which may be expected from him, not as a lawyer, a physician, a mariner, an astronomer, or a natural philosopher, but as a Man. Except this one restriction, there is no object standing between the Poet and the image of things; between this, and the Biographer and Historian, there are a thousand.

Nor let this necessity of producing immediate pleasure be considered as a degradation of the Poet's art. It is far otherwise. It is an acknowledgment of the beauty of the universe, an acknowledgment the more sincere, because not formal, but indirect; it is a task light and easy to him who looks at the world in the spirit of love: further, it is a homage paid to the native and naked dignity of man, to the grand elementary principle of pleasure, by which he knows, and feels, and lives, and moves. We have no sympathy but what is propagated by pleasure: I would not be misunderstood; but wherever we sympathise with pain, it will be found that the sympathy is produced and carried on by subtle combinations with pleasure. We have no knowledge, that is, no general principles drawn from the contemplation of particular facts, but what has been built up by pleasure, and exists in us by pleasure alone. The Man of science, the Chemist and Mathematician, whatever difficulties and disgusts they may have had to struggle with, know and feel this. However painful may be the objects with which the Anatomist's knowledge is connected, he feels that his knowledge is pleasure; and where he has no pleasure he has no knowledge. What then does the Poet? He considers man and the objects that surround him as acting and re-acting upon each other, so as to produce an infinite complexity of pain and pleasure; he considers man in his own nature and in his ordinary life as contemplating this with a certain quantity of immediate knowledge, with certain convictions, intuitions, and deductions, which from habit acquire the quality of intuitions; he considers him as looking upon this complex scene of ideas and sensations, and finding every where objects that immediately excite in him sympathies which, from the necessities of his nature, are accompanied by an overbalance of enjoyment.

To this knowledge which all men carry about with them, and to these sympathies in which, without any other discipline than that of our daily life, we are fitted to take delight, the Poet principally directs his attention. He considers man and nature as essentially adapted to each other, and the mind of man as naturally the mirror of the fairest and most interesting properties of nature. And thus the Poet, prompted by this feeling of pleasure, which accompanies him through the whole course of his studies, converses with general nature, with affections akin to those, which, through labour and length of time, the Man of science has raised up in himself, by conversing with those particular parts of nature which are the objects of his studies. The knowledge both of the Poet and the Man of science is pleasure; but the knowledge of the one cleaves to us as a necessary part of our existence, our natural and unalienable inheritance; the other is a personal and individual acquisition, slow to come to us, and by no habitual and direct sympathy connecting us with our fellow-beings. The Man of science seeks truth as a remote and unknown benefactor; he cherishes and loves it in his solitude: the Poet, singing a song in which all human beings join with him, rejoices in the presence of truth as our visible friend and hourly companion. Poetry is the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge; it is the impassioned expression which is in the countenance of all Science. Emphatically may it be said of the Poet, as Shakspeare hath said of man, 'that he looks before and after.' He is the rock of defence for human nature; an upholder and preserver, carrying every where with him relationship and love. In spite of difference of soil and climate, of language and manners, of laws and customs: in spite of things silently gone out of mind, and things violently destroyed; the Poet binds together by passion and knowledge the vast empire of human society, as it is spread over the whole earth, and over all time. The objects of the Poet's thoughts are every where; though the eyes and senses of man are, it is true, his favourite guides, yet he will follow wheresoever he can find an atmosphere of sensation in which to move his wings. Poetry is the first and last of all knowledge—it is as immortal as the heart of man. If the labours of Men of science should ever create any material revolution, direct or indirect, in our condition, and in the impressions which we habitually receive, the Poet will sleep then no more than at present; he will be ready to follow the steps of the Man of science, not only in those general indirect effects, but he will be at his side, carrying

sensation into the midst of the objects of the science itself. The remotest discoveries of the Chemist, the Botanist, or Mineralogist, will be as proper objects of the Poet's art as any upon which it can be employed, if the time should ever come when these things shall be familiar to us, and the relations under which they are contemplated by the followers of these respective sciences shall be manifestly and palpably material to us as enjoying and suffering beings. If the time should ever come when what is now called science, thus familiarised to men, shall be ready to put on, as it were, a form of flesh and blood, the Poet will lend his divine spirit to aid the transfiguration, and will welcome the Being thus produced, as a dear and genuine inmate of the household of man.—It is not, then, to be supposed that any one, who holds that sublime notion of Poetry which I have attempted to convey, will break in upon the sanctity and truth of his pictures by transitory and accidental ornaments, and endeavour to excite admiration of himself by arts, the necessity of which must manifestly depend upon the assumed meanness of his subject.

What has been thus far said applies to Poetry in general; but especially to those parts of composition where the Poet speaks through the mouths of his characters; and upon this point it appears to authorise the conclusion that there are few persons of good sense, who would not allow that the dramatic parts of composition are defective, in proportion as they deviate from the real language of nature, and are coloured by a diction of the Poet's own, either peculiar to him as an individual Poet or belonging simply to Poets in general; to a body of men who, from the circumstance of their compositions being in metre, it is expected will employ a particular language.

It is not, then, in the dramatic parts of composition that we look for this distinction of language; but still it may be proper and necessary where the Poet speaks to us in his own person and character. To this I answer by referring the Reader to the description before given of a Poet. Among the qualities there enumerated as principally conducing to form a Poet, is implied nothing differing in kind from other men, but only in degree. The sum of what was said is, that the Poet is chiefly distinguished from other men by a greater promptness to think and feel without immediate external excitement, and a greater power in expressing such thoughts and feelings as are produced in him in that manner. But these passions and thoughts and feelings are the general passions and thoughts and feelings of men. And with what are they

connected? Undoubtedly with our moral sentiments and animal sensations, and with the causes which excite these; with the operations of the elements, and the appearances of the visible universe; with storm and sunshine, with the revolutions of the seasons, with cold and heat, with loss of friends and kindred, with injuries and resentments, gratitude and hope, with fear and sorrow. These, and the like, are the sensations and objects which the Poet describes, as they are the sensations of other men, and the objects which interest them. The Poet thinks and feels in the spirit of human passions. How, then, can his language differ in any material degree from that of all other men who feel vividly and see clearly? It might be *proved* that it is impossible. But supposing that this were not the case, the Poet might then be allowed to use a peculiar language when expressing his feelings for his own gratification, or that of men like himself. But Poets do not write for Poets alone, but for men. Unless therefore we are advocates for that admiration which subsists upon ignorance, and that pleasure which arises from hearing what we do not understand, the Poet must descend from this supposed height; and, in order to excite rational sympathy, he must express himself as other men express themselves. To this it may be added, that while he is only selecting from the real language of men, or, which amounts to the same thing, composing accurately in the spirit of such selection, he is treading upon safe ground, and we know what we are to expect from him. Our feelings are the same with respect to metre; for, as it may be proper to remind the Reader, the distinction of metre is regular and uniform, and not, like that which is produced by what is usually called POETIC DICTION, arbitrary, and subject to infinite caprices upon which no calculation whatever can be made. In the one case, the Reader is utterly at the mercy of the Poet, respecting what imagery or diction he may choose to connect with the passion; whereas, in the other, the metre obeys certain laws, to which the Poet and Reader both willingly submit because they are certain, and because no interference is made by them with the passion but such as the concurring testimony of ages has shown to heighten and improve the pleasure which co-exists with it.

It will now be proper to answer an obvious question, namely, Why, professing these opinions, have I written in verse? To this, in addition to such answer as is included in what has been already said, I reply, in the first place, Because, however I may have restricted myself, there is still left open to me what confessedly constitutes the most

valuable object of all writing, whether in prose or verse; the great and universal passions of men, the most general and interesting of their occupations, and the entire world of nature before me—to supply endless combinations of forms and imagery. Now, supposing for a moment that whatever is interesting in these objects may be as vividly described in prose, why should I be condemned for attempting to superadd to such description, the charm which, by the consent of all nations, is acknowledged to exist in metrical language? To this, by such as are yet unconvinced, it may be answered that a very small part of the pleasure given by Poetry depends upon the metre, and that it is injudicious to write in metre, unless it be accompanied with the other artificial distinctions of style with which metre is usually accompanied, and that, by such deviation, more will be lost from the shock which will thereby be given to the Reader's associations than will be counterbalanced by any pleasure which he can derive from the general power of numbers. In answer to those who still contend for the necessity of accompanying metre with certain appropriate colours of style in order to the accomplishment of its appropriate end, and who also, in my opinion, greatly under-rate the power of metre in itself, it might, perhaps, as far as relates to these Volumes, have been almost sufficient to observe, that poems are extant, written upon more humble subjects, and in a still more naked and simple style, which have continued to give pleasure from generation to generation. Now, if nakedness and simplicity be a defect, the fact here mentioned affords a strong presumption that poems somewhat less naked and simple are capable of affording pleasure at the present day; and, what I wished *chiefly* to attempt, at present, was to justify myself for having written under the impression of this belief.

But various causes might be pointed out why, when the style is manly, and the subject of some importance, words metrically arranged will long continue to impart such a pleasure to mankind as he who proves the extent of that pleasure will be desirous to impart. The end of Poetry is to produce excitement in co-existence with an over-balance of pleasure; but, by the supposition, excitement is an unusual and irregular state of the mind; ideas and feelings do not, in that state, succeed each other in accustomed order. If the words, however, by which this excitement is produced be in themselves powerful, or the images and feelings have an undue proportion of pain connected with them, there is some danger that the excitement may be carried beyond its proper

bounds. Now the co-presence of something regular, something to which the mind has been accustomed in various moods and in a less excited state, cannot but have great efficacy in tempering and restraining the passion by an intertexture of ordinary feeling, and of feeling not strictly and necessarily connected with the passion. This is unquestionably true; and hence, though the opinion will at first appear paradoxical, from the tendency of metre to divest language, in a certain degree, of its reality, and thus to throw a sort of half-consciousness of unsubstantial existence over the whole composition, there can be little doubt but that more pathetic situations and sentiments, that is, those which have a greater proportion of pain connected with them, may be endured in metrical composition, especially in rhyme, than in prose. The metre of the old ballads is very artless; yet they contain many passages which would illustrate this opinion; and, I hope, if the following Poems be attentively perused, similar instances will be found in them. This opinion may be further illustrated by appealing to the Reader's own experience of the reluctance with which he comes to the re-perusal of the distressful parts of *Clarissa Harlowe*, or the *Gamester*; while Shakspeare's writings, in the most pathetic scenes, never act upon us, as pathetic, beyond the bounds of pleasure—an effect which, in a much greater degree than might at first be imagined, is to be ascribed to small, but continual and regular impulses of pleasurable surprise from the metrical arrangement.—On the other hand (what it must be allowed will much more frequently happen) if the Poet's words should be incommensurate with the passion, and inadequate to raise the Reader to a height of desirable excitement, then, (unless the Poet's choice of his metre has been grossly injudicious) in the feelings of pleasure which the Reader has been accustomed to connect with metre in general, and in the feeling, whether cheerful or melancholy, which he has been accustomed to connect with that particular movement of metre, there will be found something which will greatly contribute to impart passion to the words, and to effect the complex end which the Poet proposes to himself.

If I had undertaken a SYSTEMATIC defence of the theory here maintained, it would have been my duty to develop the various causes upon which the pleasure received from metrical language depends. Among the chief of these causes is to be reckoned a principle which must be well known to those who have made any of the Arts

the object of accurate reflection; namely, the pleasure which the mind derives from the perception of similitude in dissimilitude. This principle is the great spring of the activity of our minds, and their chief feeder. From this principle the direction of the sexual appetite, and all the passions connected with it, take their origin: it is the life of our ordinary conversation; and upon the accuracy with which similitude in dissimilitude, and dissimilitude in similitude are perceived, depend our taste and our moral feelings. It would not be a useless employment to apply this principle to the consideration of metre, and to show that metre is hence enabled to afford much pleasure, and to point out in what manner that pleasure is produced. But my limits will not permit me to enter upon this subject, and I must content myself with a general summary.

I have said that poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquillity: the emotion is contemplated till, by a species of re-action, the tranquillity gradually disappears, and an emotion, kindred to that which was before the subject of contemplation, is gradually produced, and does itself actually exist in the mind. In this mood successful composition generally begins, and in a mood similar to this it is carried on; but the emotion, of whatever kind, and in whatever degree, from various causes, is qualified by various pleasures, so that in describing any passions whatsoever, which are voluntarily described, the mind will, upon the whole, be in a state of enjoyment. If Nature be thus cautious to preserve in a state of enjoyment a being so employed, the Poet ought to profit by the lesson held forth to him, and ought especially to take care, that, whatever passions he communicates to his Reader, those passions, if his Reader's mind be sound and vigorous, should always be accompanied with an overbalance of pleasure. Now the music of harmonious metrical language, the sense of difficulty overcome, and the blind association of pleasure which has been previously received from works of rhyme or metre of the same or similar construction, an indistinct perception perpetually renewed of language closely resembling that of real life, and yet, in the circumstance of metre, differing from it so widely—all these imperceptibly make up a complex feeling of delight, which is of the most important use in tempering the painful feeling always found intermingled with powerful descriptions of the deeper passions. This effect is always produced in pathetic and impassioned poetry; while, in lighter compo-

sitions, the ease and gracefulness with which the Poet manages his numbers are themselves confessedly a principal source of the gratification of the Reader. All that it is *necessary* to say, however, upon this subject, may be effected by affirming, what few persons will deny, that, of two descriptions, either of passions, manners, or characters, each of them equally well executed, the one in prose and the other in verse, the verse will be read a hundred times where the prose is read once.

Having thus explained a few of my reasons for writing in verse, and why I have chosen subjects from common life, and endeavoured to bring my language near to the real language of men, if I have been too minute in pleading my own cause, I have at the same time been treating a subject of general interest; and for this reason a few words shall be added with reference solely to these particular poems, and to some defects which will probably be found in them. I am sensible that my associations must have sometimes been particular instead of general, and that, consequently, giving to things a false importance, I may have sometimes written upon unworthy subjects; but I am less apprehensive on this account, than that my language may frequently have suffered from those arbitrary connections of feelings and ideas with particular words and phrases, from which no man can altogether protect himself. Hence I have no doubt, that, in some instances, feelings, even of the ludicrous, may be given to my Readers by expressions which appeared to me tender and pathetic. Such faulty expressions, were I convinced they were faulty at present, and that they must necessarily continue to be so, I would willingly take all reasonable pains to correct. But it is dangerous to make these alterations on the simple authority of a few individuals, or even of certain classes of men; for where the understanding of an Author is not convinced, or his feelings altered, this cannot be done without great injury to himself: for his own feelings are his stay and support; and, if he set them aside in one instance, he may be induced to repeat this act till his mind shall lose all confidence in itself, and become utterly debilitated. To this it may be added, that the critic ought never to forget that he is himself exposed to the same errors as the Poet, and, perhaps, in a much greater degree: for there can be no presumption in saying of most readers, that it is not probable they will be so well acquainted with the various stages of meaning through which words have passed, or with the fickleness or stability of the

relations of particular ideas to each other; and, above all, since they are so much less interested in the subject, they may decide lightly and carelessly.

Long as the Reader has been detained, I hope he will permit me to caution him against a mode of false criticism which has been applied to Poetry, in which the language closely resembles that of life and nature. Such verses have been triumphed over in parodies, of which Dr. Johnson's stanza is a fair specimen:—

'I put my hat upon my head
And walked into the Strand,
And there I met another man
Whose hat was in his hand.'

Immediately under these lines let us place one of the most justly-admired stanzas of the "*Babes in the Wood*."

'These pretty Babes with hand in hand
Went wandering up and down;
But never more they saw the Man
Approaching from the Town.'

In both these stanzas the words, and the order of the words, in no respect differ from the most unimpassioned conversation. There are words in both, for example, 'the Strand,' and 'the Town,' connected with none but the most familiar ideas; yet the one stanza we admit as admirable, and the other as a fair example of the superlatively contemptible. Whence arises this difference? Not from the metre, not from the language, not from the order of the words; but the *matter* expressed in Dr. Johnson's stanza is contemptible. The proper method of treating trivial and simple verses, to which Dr. Johnson's stanza would be a fair parallelism, is not to say, this is a bad kind of poetry, or, this is not poetry; but, this wants sense; it is neither interesting in itself, nor can *lead* to any thing interesting; the images neither originate in that sane state of feeling which arises out of thought, nor can excite thought or feeling in the Reader. This is the only sensible manner of dealing with such verses. Why trouble yourself about the species till you have previously decided upon the genus? Why take pains to prove that an ape is not a Newton, when it is self-evident that he is not a man?

One request I must make of my reader, which is, that in judging these Poems he would decide by his own feelings genuinely, and not by reflection upon what will probably be the judgment of others. How common is it to hear a person say, I myself do not object to this style of composition, or this or that expression, but, to such and such classes of

people it will appear mean or ludicrous ! This mode of criticism, so destructive of all sound unadulterated judgment, is almost universal : let the Reader then abide, independently, by his own feelings, and, if he finds himself affected, let him not suffer such conjectures to interfere with his pleasure.

If an Author, by any single composition, has impressed us with respect for his talents, it is useful to consider this as affording a presumption, that on other occasions where we have been displeased, he, nevertheless, may not have written ill or absurdly ; and further, to give him so much credit for this one composition as may induce us to review what has displeased us, with more care than we should otherwise have bestowed upon it. This is not only an act of justice, but, in our decisions upon poetry especially, may conduce, in a high degree, to the improvement of our own taste : for an *accurate* taste in poetry, and in all the other arts, as Sir Joshua Reynolds has observed, is an *acquired* talent, which can only be produced by thought and a long-continued intercourse with the best models of composition. This is mentioned, not with so ridiculous a purpose as to prevent the most inexperienced Reader from judging for himself, (I have already said that I wish him to judge for himself ;) but merely to temper the rashness of decision, and to suggest, that, if Poetry be a subject on which much time has not been bestowed, the judgment may be erroneous ; and that, in many cases, it necessarily will be so.

Nothing would, I know, have so effectually contributed to further the end which I have in view, as to have shown of what kind the pleasure is, and how that pleasure is produced, which is confessedly produced by metrical composition essentially different from that which I have here endeavoured to recommend : for the Reader will say that he has been pleased by such composition ; and what more can be done for him ? The power of any art is limited ; and he will suspect, that, if it be proposed to furnish him with new friends, that

can be only upon condition of his abandoning his old friends. Besides, as I have said, the Reader is himself conscious of the pleasure which he has received from such composition, composition to which he has peculiarly attached the endearing name of Poetry ; and all men feel an habitual gratitude, and something of an honourable bigotry, for the objects which have long continued to please them : we not only wish to be pleased, but to be pleased in that particular way in which we have been accustomed to be pleased. There is in these feelings enough to resist a host of arguments ; and I should be the less able to combat them successfully, as I am willing to allow, that, in order entirely to enjoy the Poetry which I am recommending, it would be necessary to give up much of what is ordinarily enjoyed. But, would my limits have permitted me to point out how this pleasure is produced, many obstacles might have been removed, and the Reader assisted in perceiving that the powers of language are not so limited as he may suppose ; and that it is possible for poetry to give other enjoyments, of a purer, more lasting, and more exquisite nature. This part of the subject has not been altogether neglected, but it has not been so much my present aim to prove, that the interest excited by some other kinds of poetry is less vivid, and less worthy of the nobler powers of the mind, as to offer reasons for presuming, that if my purpose were fulfilled, a species of poetry would be produced, which is genuine poetry ; in its nature well adapted to interest mankind permanently, and likewise important in the multiplicity and quality of its moral relations.

From what has been said, and from a perusal of the Poems, the Reader will be able clearly to perceive the object which I had in view : he will determine how far it has been attained ; and, what is a much more important question, whether it be worth attaining : and upon the decision of these two questions will rest my claim to the approbation of the Public.

APPENDIX.

See page 656—' by what is usually called POETIC DICTION.

PERHAPS, as I have no right to expect that attentive perusal, without which, confined, as I have been, to the narrow limits of a preface, my meaning cannot be thoroughly understood, I am anxious to give an exact notion of the sense in which the phrase poetic diction has been used ; and for this purpose, a few words shall here be added, concerning the origin and characteristics of the phraseology, which I have condemned under that name.

The earliest poets of all nations generally wrote from passion excited by real events ; they wrote naturally, and as men : feeling powerfully as they did, their language was daring, and figurative. In succeeding times, Poets, and Men ambitious of the fame of Poets, perceiving the influence of such language, and desirous of producing the same effect without being animated by the same passion, set themselves to a mechanical adoption of these figures of speech, and made use of them, sometimes with propriety, but much more frequently applied them to feelings and thoughts with which they had no natural connection whatsoever. A language was thus insensibly produced, differing materially from the real language of men in *any situation*. The Reader or Hearer of this distorted language found himself in a perturbed and unusual state of mind : when affected by the genuine language of passion he had been in a perturbed and unusual state of mind also : in both cases he was willing that his common judgment and understanding should be laid asleep, and he had no instinctive and infallible perception of the true to make him reject the false ; the one served as a passport for the other. The emotion was in both cases delightful, and no wonder if he confounded the one with the other, and believed them both to be produced by the same, or similar causes. Besides, the Poet spake to him in the character of a man to be looked up to, a man of genius and authority. Thus, and from a variety of other causes, this distorted language was received with admiration ; and Poets, it is probable, who had before contented themselves for the most part with misapplying only expressions which at first had been dictated by real passion,

carried the abuse still further, and introduced phrases composed apparently in the spirit of the original figurative language of passion, yet altogether of their own invention, and characterised by various degrees of wanton deviation from good sense and nature.

It is indeed true, that the language of the earliest Poets was felt to differ materially from ordinary language, because it was the language of extraordinary occasions ; but it was really spoken by men, language which the Poet himself had uttered when he had been affected by the events which he described, or which he had heard uttered by those around him. To this language it is probable that metre of some sort or other was early superadded. This separated the genuine language of Poetry still further from common life, so that whoever read or heard the poems of these earliest Poets felt himself moved in a way in which he had not been accustomed to be moved in real life, and by causes manifestly different from those which acted upon him in real life. This was the great temptation to all the corruptions which have followed : under the protection of this feeling succeeding Poets constructed a phraseology which had one thing, it is true, in common with the genuine language of poetry, namely, that it was not heard in ordinary conversation ; that it was unusual. But the first Poets, as I have said, spake a language which, though unusual, was still the language of men. This circumstance, however, was disregarded by their successors ; they found that they could please by easier means : they became proud of modes of expression which they themselves had invented, and which were uttered only by themselves. In process of time metre became a symbol or promise of this unusual language, and whoever took upon him to write in metre, according as he possessed more or less of true poetic genius, introduced less or more of this adulterated phraseology into his compositions, and the true and the false were inseparably interwoven until, the taste of men becoming gradually perverted, this language was received as a natural language : and at length, by the in-

fluence of books upon men, did to a certain degree really become so. Abuses of this kind were imported from one nation to another, and with the progress of refinement this diction became daily more and more corrupt, thrusting out of sight the plain humanities of nature by a motley masquerade of tricks, quaintnesses, hieroglyphics, and enigmas.

It would not be uninteresting to point out the causes of the pleasure given by this extravagant and absurd diction. It depends upon a great variety of causes, but upon none, perhaps, more than its influence in impressing a notion of the peculiarity and exaltation of the Poet's character, and in flattering the Reader's self-love by bringing him nearer to a sympathy with that character; an effect which is accomplished by unsettling ordinary habits of thinking, and thus assisting the Reader to approach to that perturbed and dizzy state of mind in which if he does not find himself, he imagines that he is *balked* of a peculiar enjoyment which poetry can and ought to bestow.

The sonnet quoted from Gray, in the Preface, except the lines printed in Italics, consists of little else but this diction, though not of the worst kind; and indeed, if one may be permitted to say so, it is far too common in the best writers both ancient and modern. Perhaps in no way, by positive example, could more easily be given a notion of what I mean by the phrase *poetic diction* than by referring to a comparison between the metrical paraphrase which we have of passages in the Old and New Testament, and those passages as they exist in our common Translation. See Pope's "Messiah" throughout; Prior's 'Did sweeter sounds adorn my flowing tongue,' &c. &c. 'Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels,' &c. &c. 1st Corinthians, chap. xiii. By way of immediate example, take the following of Dr Johnson:

'Turn on the prudent Ant thy heedless eyes,
Observe her labours, Sluggard, and be wise;
No stern command, no monitory voice,
Prescribes her duties, or directs her choice;
Yet, timely provident, she hastes away
To snatch the blessings of a plenteous day;
When fruitful Summer loads the teeming plain,
She crops the harvest, and she stores the grain.
How long shall sloth usurp thy useless hours,
Unnerve thy vigour, and enchain thy powers?
While artful shades thy downy couch enclose,
And soft solicitation courts repose,
Amidst the drowsy charms of dull delight,
Year chases year with unremitted flight,
Till Want now following, fraudulent and slow,
Shall spring to seize thee, like an ambush'd foe.'

From this hubbub of words pass to the original.
'Go to the Ant, thou Sluggard, consider her ways,
and be wise: which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest. How long wilt thou sleep, O Sluggard? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep? Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep. So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man.' Proverbs, chap. vi.

One more quotation, and I have done. It is from Cowper's Verses supposed to be written by Alexander Selkirk:—

'Religion! what treasure untold
Resides in that heavenly word!
More precious than silver and gold,
Or all that this earth can afford.
But the sound of the church-going bell
These valleys and rocks never heard,
Ne'er sighed at the sound of a knell,
Or smiled when a sabbath appeared.

Ye winds, that have made me your sport
Convey to this desolate shore
Some cordial endearing report
Of a land I must visit no more.
My Friends, do they now and then send
A wish or a thought after me?
O tell me I yet have a friend,
Though a friend I am never to see.'

This passage is quoted as an instance of three different styles of composition. The first four lines are poorly expressed; some Critics would call the language prosaic; the fact is, it would be bad prose, so bad, that it is scarcely worse in metre. The epithet 'church-going' applied to a bell, and that by so chaste a writer as Cowper, is an instance of the strange abuses which Poets have introduced into their language, till they and their Readers take them as matters of course, if they do not single them out expressly as objects of admiration. The two lines 'Ne'er sighed at the sound,' &c., are, in my opinion, an instance of the language of passion wrested from its proper use, and, from the mere circumstance of the composition being in metre, applied upon an occasion that does not justify such violent expressions; and I should condemn the passage, though perhaps few Readers will agree with me, as vicious poetic diction. The last stanza is throughout admirably expressed: it would be equally good whether in prose or verse, except that the Reader has an exquisite pleasure in seeing such natural language so naturally connected with metre. The beauty of this stanza tempts me to conclude with a principle which ought never to be lost sight of, and which has been my chief

guide in all I have said,—namely, that in works of *imagination and sentiment*, for of these only have I been treating, in proportion as ideas and feelings are valuable, whether the composition be in prose or in verse, they require and exact one

and the same language. Metre is but adventitious to composition, and the phraseology for which that passport is necessary, even where it may be graceful at all, will be little valued by the judicious.

ESSAY, SUPPLEMENTARY TO THE PREFACE.

WITH the young of both sexes, Poetry is, like love, a passion; but, for much the greater part of those who have been proud of its power over their minds, a necessity soon arises of breaking the pleasing bondage; or it relaxes of itself;—the thoughts being occupied in domestic cares, or the time engrossed by business. Poetry then becomes only an occasional recreation; while to those whose existence passes away in a course of fashionable pleasure, it is a species of luxurious amusement. In middle and declining age, a scattered number of serious persons resort to poetry, as to religion, for a protection against the pressure of trivial employments, and as a consolation for the afflictions of life. And, lastly, there are many, who, having been enamoured of this art in their youth, have found leisure, after youth was spent, to cultivate general literature; in which poetry has continued to be comprehended as a study.

Into the above classes the Readers of poetry may be divided; Critics abound in them all; but from the last only can opinions be collected of absolute value, and worthy to be depended upon, as prophetic of the destiny of a new work. The young, who in nothing can escape delusion, are especially subject to it in their intercourse with Poetry. The cause, not so obvious as the fact is unquestionable, is the same as that from which erroneous judgments in this art, in the minds of men of all ages, chiefly proceed; but upon Youth it operates with peculiar force. The appropriate business of poetry, (which, nevertheless, if genuine, is as permanent as pure science,) her appropriate employment, her privilege and her duty, is to treat of things not as they *are*, but as they *appear*; not as they exist in themselves, but as they *seem* to exist to the *senses*, and to the *passions*. What a world of delusion does this acknowledged obligation prepare for the inexperienced! what temptations to go astray are here held forth for them whose thoughts have been little disciplined by the under-

standing, and whose feelings revolt from the sway of reason!—When a juvenile Reader is in the height of his rapture with some vicious passage, should experience throw in doubts, or common-sense suggest suspicions, a lurking consciousness that the realities of the Muse are but shows, and that her liveliest excitements are raised by transient shocks of conflicting feeling and successive assemblages of contradictory thoughts—is ever at hand to justify extravagance, and to sanction absurdity. But, it may be asked, as these illusions are unavoidable, and, no doubt, eminently useful to the mind as a process, what good can be gained by making observations, the tendency of which is to diminish the confidence of youth in its feelings, and thus to abridge its innocent and even profitable pleasures? The reproach implied in the question could not be warded off, if Youth were incapable of being delighted with what is truly excellent; or, if these errors always terminated of themselves in due season. But, with the majority, though their force be abated, they continue through life. Moreover, the fire of youth is too vivacious an element to be extinguished or damped by a philosophical remark; and, while there is no danger that what has been said will be injurious or painful to the ardent and the confident, it may prove beneficial to those who, being enthusiastic, are, at the same time, modest and ingenuous. The intimation may unite with their own misgivings to regulate their sensibility, and to bring in, sooner than it would otherwise have arrived, a more discreet and sound judgment.

If it should excite wonder that men of ability, in later life, whose understandings have been rendered acute by practice in affairs, should be so easily and so far imposed upon when they happen to take up a new work in verse, this appears to be the cause;—that, having discontinued their attention to poetry, whatever progress may have been made in other departments of knowledge, they have not, as to

this art, advanced in true discernment beyond the age of youth. If, then, a new poem fall in their way, whose attractions are of that kind which would have enraptured them during the heat of youth, the judgment not being improved to a degree that they shall be disgusted, they are dazzled; and prize and cherish the faults for having had power to make the present time vanish before them, and to throw the mind back, as by enchantment, into the happiest season of life. As they read, powers seem to be revived, passions are regenerated, and pleasures restored. The Book was probably taken up after an escape from the burden of business, and with a wish to forget the world, and all its vexations and anxieties. Having obtained this wish, and so much more, it is natural that they should make report as they have felt.

If Men of mature age, through want of practice, be thus easily beguiled into admiration of absurdities, extravagances, and misplaced ornaments, thinking it proper that their understandings should enjoy a holiday, while they are unbending their minds with verse, it may be expected that such Readers will resemble their former selves also in strength of prejudice, and an inaptitude to be moved by the unostentatious beauties of a pure style. In the higher poetry, an enlightened Critic chiefly looks for a reflection of the wisdom of the heart and the grandeur of the imagination. Wherever these appear, simplicity accompanies them; Magnificence herself, when legitimate, depending upon a simplicity of her own, to regulate her ornaments. But it is a well-known property of human nature, that our estimates are ever governed by comparisons, of which we are conscious with various degrees of distinctness. Is it not, then, inevitable (confining these observations to the effects of style merely) that an eye, accustomed to the glaring hues of diction by which such Readers are caught and excited, will for the most part be rather repelled than attracted by an original Work, the colouring of which is disposed according to a pure and refined scheme of harmony? It is in the fine arts as in the affairs of life, no man can *serve* (i. e. obey with zeal and fidelity) two Masters.

As Poetry is most just to its own divine origin when it administers the comforts and breathes the spirit of religion, they who have learned to perceive this truth, and who betake themselves to reading verse for sacred purposes, must be preserved from numerous illusions to which the two Classes of Readers, whom we have been considering, are liable. But, as the mind grows serious from the weight of life, the range of its passions is contracted

accordingly; and its sympathies become so exclusive, that many species of high excellence wholly escape, or but languidly excite, its notice. Besides, men who read from religious or moral inclinations, even when the subject is of that kind which they approve, are beset with misconceptions and mistakes peculiar to themselves. Attaching so much importance to the truths which interest them, they are prone to over-rate the Authors by whom those truths are expressed and enforced. They come prepared to impart so much passion to the Poet's language, that they remain unconscious how little, in fact, they receive from it. And, on the other hand, religious faith is to him who holds it so momentous a thing, and error appears to be attended with such tremendous consequences, that, if opinions touching upon religion occur which the Reader condemns, he not only cannot sympathise with them, however animated the expression, but there is, for the most part, an end put to all satisfaction and enjoyment. Love, if it before existed, is converted into dislike; and the heart of the Reader is set against the Author and his book.—To these excesses, they, who from their professions ought to be the most guarded against them, are perhaps the most liable; I mean those sects whose religion, being from the calculating understanding, is cold and formal. For when Christianity, the religion of humility, is founded upon the proudest faculty of our nature, what can be expected but contradictions? Accordingly, believers of this cast are at one time contemptuous; at another, being troubled, as they are and must be, with inward misgivings, they are jealous and suspicious;—and at all seasons, they are under temptation to supply by the heat with which they defend their tenets, the animation which is wanting to the constitution of the religion itself.

Faith was given to man that his affections, detached from the treasures of time, might be inclined to settle upon those of eternity:—the elevation of his nature, which this habit produces on earth, being to him a presumptive evidence of a future state of existence; and giving him a title to partake of its holiness. The religious man values what he sees chiefly as an 'imperfect shadowing forth' of what he is incapable of seeing. The concerns of religion refer to indefinite objects, and are too weighty for the mind to support them without relieving itself by resting a great part of the burthen upon words and symbols. The commerce between Man and his Maker cannot be carried on but by a process where much is represented in little, and the Infinite Being accommo-

dates himself to a finite capacity. In all this may be perceived the affinity between religion and poetry; between religion—making up the deficiencies of reason by faith; and poetry—passionate for the instruction of reason; between religion—whose element is infinitude, and whose ultimate trust is the supreme of things, submitting herself to circumscription, and reconciled to substitutions; and poetry—ethereal and transcendent, yet incapable to sustain her existence without sensuous incarnation. In this community of nature may be perceived also the lurking incitements of kindred error;—so that we shall find that no poetry has been more subject to distortion, than that species, the argument and scope of which is religious; and no lovers of the art have gone farther astray than the pious and the devout.

Whither then shall we turn for that union of qualifications which must necessarily exist before the decisions of a critic can be of absolute value? For a mind at once poetical and philosophical; for a critic whose affections are as free and kindly as the spirit of society, and whose understanding is severe as that of dispassionate government? Where are we to look for that initiatory composure of mind which no selfishness can disturb? For a natural sensibility that has been tutored into correctness without losing anything of its quickness; and for active faculties, capable of answering the demands which an Author of original imagination shall make upon them, associated with a judgment that cannot be duped into admiration by aught that is unworthy of it?—among those and those only, who, never having suffered their youthful love of poetry to remit much of its force, have applied to the consideration of the laws of this art the best power of their understandings. At the same time it must be observed—that, as this Class comprehends the only judgments which are trust-worthy, so does it include the most erroneous and perverse. For to be mis-taught is worse than to be untaught; and no perverseness equals that which is supported by system, no errors are so difficult to root out as those which the understanding has pledged its credit to uphold. In this Class are contained censors, who, if they be pleased with what is good, are pleased with it only by imperfect glimpses, and upon false principles; who, should they generalise rightly, to a certain point, are sure to suffer for it in the end; who, if they stumble upon a sound rule, are fettered by misapplying it, or by straining it too far; being incapable of perceiving when it ought to yield to one of higher order. In it are

found critics too petulant to be passive to a genuine poet, and too feeble to grapple with him; men, who take upon them to report of the course which *he* holds whom they are utterly unable to accompany,—confounded if he turn quick upon the wing, dismayed if he soar steadily ‘into the region;’—men of palsied imaginations and indurated hearts; in whose minds all healthy action is languid, who therefore feed as the many direct them, or, with the many, are greedy after vicious provocatives;—judges, whose censure is auspicious, and whose praise ominous! In this class meet together the two extremes of best and worst.

The observations presented in the foregoing series are of too ungracious a nature to have been made without reluctance; and, were it only on this account, I would invite the reader to try them by the test of comprehensive experience. If the number of judges who can be confidently relied upon be in reality so small, it ought to follow that partial notice only, or neglect, perhaps long continued, or attention wholly inadequate to their merits—must have been the fate of most works in the higher departments of poetry; and that, on the other hand, numerous productions have blazed into popularity, and have passed away, leaving scarcely a trace behind them: it will be further found, that when Authors shall have at length raised themselves into general admiration and maintained their ground, errors and prejudices have prevailed concerning their genius and their works, which the few who are conscious of those errors and prejudices would deplore; if they were not recompensed by perceiving that there are select Spirits for whom it is ordained that their fame shall be in the world an existence like that of Virtue, which owes its being to the struggles it makes, and its vigour to the enemies whom it provokes;—a vivacious quality, ever doomed to meet with opposition, and still triumphing over it; and, from the nature of its dominion, incapable of being brought to the sad conclusion of Alexander, when he wept that there were no more worlds for him to conquer.

Let us take a hasty retrospect of the poetical literature of this Country for the greater part of the last two centuries, and see if the facts support these inferences.

Who is there that now reads the “Creation” of Dubartas? Yet all Europe once resounded with his praise; he was caressed by kings; and, when his Poem was translated into our language, the Faery Queen faded before it. The name of Spenser, whose genius is of a higher order than even that of Ariosto, is at this day scarcely

known beyond the limits of the British Isles. And if the value of his works is to be estimated from the attention now paid to them by his countrymen, compared with that which they bestow on those of some other writers, it must be pronounced small indeed.

'The laurel, meed of mighty conquerors
And poets sage'—

are his own words; but his wisdom has, in this particular, been his worst enemy: while its opposite, whether in the shape of folly or madness, has been *their* best friend. But he was a great power, and bears a high name: the laurel has been awarded to him.

A dramatic Author, if he write for the stage, must adapt himself to the taste of the audience, or they will not endure him; accordingly the mighty genius of Shakspeare was listened to. The people were delighted: but I am not sufficiently versed in stage antiquities to determine whether they did not flock as eagerly to the representation of many pieces of contemporary Authors, wholly undeserving to appear upon the same boards. Had there been a formal contest for superiority among dramatic writers, that Shakspeare, like his predecessors Sophocles and Euripides, would have often been subject to the mortification of seeing the prize adjudged to sorry competitors, becomes too probable, when we reflect that the admirers of Settle and Shadwell were, in a later age, as numerous, and reckoned as respectable in point of talent, as those of Dryden. At all events, that Shakspeare stooped to accommodate himself to the People, is sufficiently apparent; and one of the most striking proofs of his almost omnipotent genius, is, that he could turn to such glorious purpose those materials which the prepossessions of the age compelled him to make use of. Yet even this marvellous skill appears not to have been enough to prevent his rivals from having some advantage over him in public estimation; else how can we account for passages and scenes that exist in his works, unless upon a supposition that some of the grossest of them, a fact which in my own mind I have no doubt of, were foisted in by the Players, for the gratification of the many?

But that his Works, whatever might be their reception upon the stage, made but little impression upon the ruling Intellects of the time, may be inferred from the fact that Lord Bacon, in his multifarious writings, nowhere either quotes or alludes to him*.—His dramatic excellence enabled

him to resume possession of the stage after the Restoration; but Dryden tells us that in his time two of the plays of Beaumont and Fletcher were acted for one of Shakspeare's. And so faint and limited was the perception of the poetic beauties of his dramas in the time of Pope, that, in his Edition of the Plays, with a view of rendering to the general reader a necessary service, he printed between inverted commas those passages which he thought most worthy of notice.

At this day, the French Critics have abated nothing of their aversion to this darling of our Nation: 'the English, with their bouffon de Shakspeare,' is as familiar an expression among them as in the time of Voltaire. Baron Grimm is the only French writer who seems to have perceived his infinite superiority to the first names of the French Theatre; an advantage which the Parisian critic owed to his German blood and German education. The most enlightened Italians, though well acquainted with our language, are wholly incompetent to measure the proportions of Shakspeare. The Germans only, of foreign nations, are approaching towards a knowledge and feeling of what he is. In some respects they have acquired a superiority over the fellow-countrymen of the Poet: for among us it is a current, I might say, an established opinion, that Shakspeare is justly praised when he is pronounced to be 'a wild irregular genius, in whom great faults are compensated by great beauties.' How long may it be before this misconception passes away, and it becomes universally acknowledged that the judgment of Shakspeare in the selection of his materials, and in the manner in which he has made them, heterogeneous as they often are, constitute a unity of their own, and contribute all to one great end, is not less admirable than his imagination, his invention, and his intuitive knowledge of human Nature!

There is extant a small Volume of miscellaneous poems, in which Shakspeare expresses his own feelings in his own person. It is not difficult to conceive that the Editor, George Steevens, should have been insensible to the beauties of one portion of that Volume, the Sonnets; though in no part of the writings of this Poet is found, in an equal compass, a greater number of exquisite feelings felicitously expressed. But, from regard to the

bears date 1635), writing to refute the error 'touching Nature's perpetual and universal decay,' cites triumphantly the names of Ariosto, Tasso, Bortas, and Spenser, as instances that poetic genius had not degenerated; but he makes no mention of Shakspeare.

* The learned Hakewill (a third edition of whose book

Critic's own credit, he would not have ventured to talk of an* act of parliament not being strong enough to compel the perusal of those little pieces, if he had not known that the people of England were ignorant of the treasures contained in them : and if he had not, moreover, shared the too common propensity of human nature to exult over a supposed fall into the mire of a genius whom he had been compelled to regard with admiration, as an inmate of the celestial regions—'there sitting where he durst not soar.'

Nine years before the death of Shakspeare, Milton was born ; and early in life he published several small poems, which, though on their first appearance they were praised by a few of the judicious, were afterwards neglected to that degree, that Pope in his youth could borrow from them without risk of its being known. Whether these poems are at this day justly appreciated, I will not undertake to decide : nor would it imply a severe reflection upon the mass of readers to suppose the contrary ; seeing that a man of the acknowledged genius of Voss, the German poet, could suffer their spirit to evaporate ; and could change their character, as is done in the translation made by him of the most popular of those pieces. At all events, it is certain that these Poems of Milton are now much read, and loudly praised ; yet were they little heard of till more than 150 years after their publication ; and of the Sonnets, Dr. Johnson, as appears from Boswell's Life of him, was in the habit of thinking and speaking as contemptuously as Steevens wrote upon those of Shakspeare.

About the time when the Pindaric odes of Cowley and his imitators, and the productions of that class of curious thinkers whom Dr. Johnson has strangely styled metaphysical Poets, were beginning to lose something of that extravagant admiration which they had excited, the *Paradise Lost* made its appearance. 'Fit audience find though few,' was the petition addressed by the Poet to his inspiring Muse. I have said elsewhere that he gained more than he asked ; this I believe to be true ; but Dr. Johnson has fallen into a gross mistake when he attempts to prove, by the sale of

the work, that Milton's Countrymen were 'just to it' upon its first appearance. Thirteen hundred Copies were sold in two years ; an uncommon example, he asserts, of the prevalence of genius in opposition to so much recent enmity as Milton's public conduct had excited. But, be it remembered that, if Milton's political and religious opinions, and the manner in which he announced them, had raised him many enemies, they had procured him numerous friends ; who, as all personal danger was passed away at the time of publication, would be eager to procure the master-work of a man whom they revered, and whom they would be proud of praising. Take, from the number of purchasers, persons of this class, and also those who wished to possess the Poem as a religious work, and but few I fear would be left who sought for it on account of its poetical merits. The demand did not immediately increase ; 'for,' says Dr. Johnson, 'many more readers' (he means persons in the habit of reading poetry) 'than were supplied at first the Nation did not afford.' How careless must a writer be who can make this assertion in the face of so many existing title-pages to belie it ! Turning to my own shelves, I find the folio of Cowley, seventh edition, 1681. A book near it is Flatman's Poems, fourth edition, 1686 ; Waller, fifth edition, same date. The Poems of Norris of Bemerton not long after went, I believe, through nine editions. What further demand there might be for these works I do not know ; but I well remember, that, twenty-five years ago, the booksellers' stalls in London swarmed with the folios of Cowley. This is not mentioned in disparagement of that able writer and amiable man ; but merely to show—that, if Milton's work were not more read, it was not because readers did not exist at the time. The early editions of the *Paradise Lost* were printed in a shape which allowed them to be sold at a low price, yet only three-thousand copies of the Work were sold in eleven years ; and the Nation, says Dr. Johnson, had been satisfied from 1623 to 1664, that is, forty-one years, with only two editions of the Works of Shakspeare ; which probably did not together make one-thousand Copies ; facts adduced by the critic to prove the 'paucity of Readers.'—There were readers in multitudes ; but their money went for other purposes, as their admiration was fixed elsewhere. We are authorized, then, to affirm, that the reception of the *Paradise Lost*, and the slow progress of its fame, are proofs as striking as can be desired that the positions which I am attempting to establish are not erro-

* This flippant insensibility was publicly reprehended by Mr. Coleridge in a course of Lectures upon Poetry given by him at the Royal Institution. For the various merits of thought and language in Shakspeare's Sonnets, see Numbers, 27, 29, 30, 32, 33, 54, 64, 66, 68, 73, 76, 86, 91, 92, 93, 97, 98, 105, 107, 108, 109, 111, 113, 114, 116, 117, 129, and many others.

neous*.—How amusing to shape to one's self such a critique as a Wit of Charles's days, or a Lord of the Miscellanies or trading Journalist of King William's time, would have brought forth, if he had set his faculties industriously to work upon this Poem, every where impregnated with *original* excellence.

So strange indeed are the obliquities of admiration, that they whose opinions are much influenced by authority will often be tempted to think that there are no fixed principles† in human nature for this art to rest upon. I have been honoured by being permitted to peruse in MS. a tract composed between the period of the Revolution and the close of that century. It is the Work of an English Peer of high accomplishments, its object to form the character and direct the studies of his son. Perhaps nowhere does a more beautiful treatise of the kind exist. The good sense and wisdom of the thoughts, the delicacy of the feelings, and the charm of the style, are, throughout, equally conspicuous. Yet the Author, selecting among the Poets of his own country those whom he deems most worthy of his son's perusal, particularises only Lord Rochester, Sir John Denham, and Cowley. Writing about the same time, Shaftesbury, an author at present unjustly depreciated, describes the English Muses as only yet lisping in their cradles.

The arts by which Pope, soon afterwards, contrived to procure to himself a more general and a higher reputation than perhaps any English Poet ever attained during his life-time, are known to the judicious. And as well known is it to them, that the undue exertion of those arts is the cause why Pope has for some time held a rank in literature, to which, if he had not been seduced by an over-love of immediate popularity, and had confided more in his native genius, he never could have descended. He bewitched the nation by his melody, and dazzled it by his polished style, and was himself blinded by his own success. Having wandered from humanity in his Eclogues with boyish inexperience, the praise, which these compositions obtained, tempted him into a belief that

Nature was not to be trusted, at least in pastoral Poetry. To prove this by example, he put his friend Gay upon writing those Eclogues which their author intended to be burlesque. The instigator of the work, and his admirers, could perceive in them nothing but what was ridiculous. Nevertheless, though these Poems contain some detestable passages, the effect, as Dr. Johnson well observes, 'of reality and truth became conspicuous even when the intention was to show them grovelling and degraded.' The Pastorals, ludicrous to such as prided themselves upon their refinement, in spite of those disgusting passages, 'became popular, and were read with delight, as just representations of rural manners and occupations.'

Something less than sixty years after the publication of the *Paradise Lost* appeared Thomson's *Winter*; which was speedily followed by his other *Seasons*. It is a work of inspiration; much of it is written from himself, and nobly from himself. How was it received? 'It was no sooner read,' says one of his contemporary biographers, 'than universally admired: those only excepted who had not been used to feel, or to look for any thing in poetry, beyond a *point* of satirical or epigrammatic wit, a smart *antithesis* richly trimmed with rhyme, or the softness of an *elegiac* complaint. To such his manly classical spirit could not readily commend itself; till, after a more attentive perusal, they had got the better of their prejudices, and either acquired or affected a truer taste. A few others stood aloof, merely because they had long before fixed the articles of their poetical creed, and resigned themselves to an absolute despair of ever seeing any thing new and original. These were somewhat mortified to find their notions disturbed by the appearance of a poet, who seemed to owe nothing but to nature and his own genius. But, in a short time, the applause became unanimous; every one wondering how so many pictures, and pictures so familiar, should have moved them but faintly to what they felt in his descriptions. His digressions too, the overflowings of a tender benevolent heart, charmed the reader no less; leaving him in doubt, whether he should more admire the Poet or love the Man.'

This case appears to bear strongly against us:—but we must distinguish between wonder and legitimate admiration. The subject of the work is the changes produced in the appearances of nature by the revolution of the year: and, by undertaking to write in verse, Thomson pledged himself to treat his subject as became a Poet. Now it is remarkable that, excepting the noctur-

* Hughes is express upon this subject: in his dedication of Spenser's Works to Lord Somers, he writes thus. 'It was your Lordship's encouraging a beautiful Edition of *Paradise Lost* that first brought that incomparable Poem to be generally known and esteemed.'

† This opinion seems actually to have been entertained by Adam Smith, the worst critic, David Hume not excepted, that Scotland, a soil to which this sort of weed seems natural, has produced.

nal Reverie of Lady Winchelsea, and a passage or two in the Windsor Forest of Pope, the poetry of the period intervening between the publication of the *Paradise Lost* and the *Seasons* does not contain a single new image of external nature ; and scarcely presents a familiar one from which it can be inferred that the eye of the Poet had been steadily fixed upon his object, much less that his feelings had urged him to work upon it in the spirit of genuine imagination. To what a low state knowledge of the most obvious and important phenomena had sunk, is evident from the style in which Dryden has executed a description of Night in one of his Tragedies, and Pope his translation of the celebrated moonlight scene in the *Iliad*. A blind man, in the habit of attending accurately to descriptions casually dropped from the lips of those around him, might easily depict these appearances with more truth. Dryden's lines are vague, bombastic, and senseless* ; those of Pope, though he had Homer to guide him, are throughout false and contradictory. The verses of Dryden, once highly celebrated, are forgotten ; those of Pope still retain their hold upon public estimation,—nay, there is not a passage of descriptive poetry, which at this day finds so many and such ardent admirers. Strange to think of an enthusiast, as may have been the case with thousands, reciting those verses under the cope of a moonlight sky, without having his raptures in the least disturbed by a suspicion of their absurdity ! —If these two distinguished writers could habitually think that the visible universe was of so little consequence to a poet, that it was scarcely necessary for him to cast his eyes upon it, we may be assured that those passages of the elder poets which faithfully and poetically describe the phenomena of nature, were not at that time holden in much estimation, and that there was little accurate attention paid to those appearances.

Wonder is the natural product of Ignorance ; and as the soil was *in such good condition* at the time of the publication of the *Seasons*, the crop was doubtless abundant. Neither individuals nor nations become corrupt all at once, nor are they enlightened in a moment. Thomson was an in-

spired poet, but he could not work miracles ; in cases where the art of seeing had in some degree been learned, the teacher would further the proficiency of his pupils, but he could do little *more* ; though so far does vanity assist men in acts of self-deception, that many would often fancy they recognised a likeness when they knew nothing of the original. Having shown that much of what his biographer deemed genuine admiration must in fact have been blind wonderment—how is the rest to be accounted for ?—Thomson was fortunate in the very title of his poem, which seemed to bring it home to the prepared sympathies of every one : in the next place, notwithstanding his high powers, he writes a vicious style ; and his false ornaments are exactly of that kind which would be most likely to strike the undiscerning. He likewise abounds with sentimental common-places, that, from the manner in which they were brought forward, bore an imposing air of novelty. In any well-used copy of the *Seasons* the book generally opens of itself with the rhapsody on love, or with one of the stories (perhaps Damon and Musidora) ; these also are prominent in our collections of Extracts, and are the parts of his Work, which, after all, were probably most efficient in first recommending the author to general notice. Pope, repaying praises which he had received, and wishing to extol him to the highest, only styles him ‘an elegant and philosophical Poet ;’ nor are we able to collect any unquestionable proofs that the true characteristics of Thomson’s genius as an imaginative poet* were perceived, till the elder Warton, almost forty years after the publication of the *Seasons*, pointed them out by a note in his *Essay on the Life and Writings of Pope*. In the *Castle of Indolence* (of which Gray speaks so coldly) these characteristics were almost as conspicuously displayed, and in verse more harmonious, and diction more pure. Yet that fine poem was neglected on its appearance, and is at this day the delight only of a few !

When Thomson died, Collins breathed forth his regrets in an Elegiac Poem, in which he pronounced a poetical curse upon *him* who should regard with insensibility the place where the Poet’s remains were deposited. The Poems of the mourner himself have now passed through

* *CORTES alone in a night-gown.*

All things are hush’d as Nature’s self lay dead ;
The mountains seem to nod their drowsy head.
The little Birds in dreams their songs repeat,
And sleeping Flowers beneath the Night-dew sweat:
Even Lust and Envy sleep ; yet Love denies
Rest to my soul, and slumber to my eyes.

DRYDEN’S *Indian Emperor*.

* Since these observations upon Thomson were written, I have perused the second edition of his *Seasons*, and find that even *that* does not contain the most striking passages which Warton points out for admiration ; these, with other improvements, throughout the whole work, must have been added at a later period.

innumerable editions, and are universally known ; but if, when Collins died, the same kind of imprecation had been pronounced by a surviving admirer, small is the number whom it would not have comprehended. The notice which his poems attained during his life-time was so small, and of course the sale so insignificant, that not long before his death he deemed it right to repay to the bookseller the sum which he had advanced for them, and threw the edition into the fire.

Next in importance to the Seasons of Thomson, though at considerable distance from that work in order of time, come the *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* ; collected, new-modelled, and in many instances (if such a contradiction in terms may be used) composed by the Editor, Dr. Percy. This work did not steal silently into the world, as is evident from the number of legendary tales, that appeared not long after its publication ; and had been modelled, as the authors persuaded themselves, after the old Ballad. The Compilation was however ill suited to the then existing taste of city society ; and Dr. Johnson, 'mid the little senate to which he gave laws, was not sparing in his exertions to make it an object of contempt. The critic triumphed, the legendary imitators were deservedly disregarded, and, as undeservedly, their ill-imitated models sank, in this country, into temporary neglect ; while Bürger, and other able writers of Germany, were translating, or imitating these *Reliques*, and composing, with the aid of inspiration thence derived, poems which are the delight of the German nation. Dr. Percy was so abashed by the ridicule flung upon his labours from the ignorance and insensibility of the persons with whom he lived, that, though while he was writing under a mask he had not wanted resolution to follow his genius into the regions of true simplicity and genuine pathos (as is evinced by the exquisite ballad of *Sir Cauline* and by many other pieces), yet when he appeared in his own person and character as a poetical writer, he adopted, as in the tale of the *Hermit of Warkworth*, a diction scarcely in any one of its features distinguishable from the vague, the glossy, and unfeeling language of his day. I mention this remarkable fact * with regret,

* Shenstone, in his *Schoolmistress*, gives a still more remarkable instance of this timidity. On its first appearance, (See D'Israeli's 2d Series of the *Curiosities of Literature*) the Poem was accompanied with an absurd prose commentary, showing, as indeed some incongruous expressions in the text imply, that the whole was intended for burlesque. In subsequent editions, the commentary was dropped, and the People have since continued to read in

esteeming the genius of Dr. Percy in this kind of writing superior to that of any other man by whom in modern times it has been cultivated. That even Bürger (to whom Klopstock gave, in my hearing, a commendation which he denied to Goethe and Schiller, pronouncing him to be a genuine poet, and one of the few among the Germans whose works would last) had not the fine sensibility of Percy, might be shown from many passages, in which he has deserted his original only to go astray. For example,

Now daye was gone, and night was come,
And all were fast asleepe,
All save the Lady Emeline,
Who sate in her bowre to weepe :

And soone she heard her true Love's voice
Low whispering at the walle,
Awake, awake, my dear Ladye,
'Tis I thy true-love call.

Which is thus tricked out and dilated :

Als nun die Nacht Gebirg' und Thal
Vermummt in Rabenschatten,
Und Hochburgs Lampen überall
Schon ausgeflimmert hatten,
Und alles tief entschlafen war ;
Doch nur das Fräulein immerdar,
Voll Fieberangst, noch wachte,
Und seinen Ritter dachte :
Da horch ! Ein süsser Liebeston
Kam leis' empor geflogen.
"Ho, Trudchen, ho ! Da bin ich schon !
Frisch auf ! Dich angezogen !"

But from humble ballads we must ascend to heroics.

All hail, Macpherson ! hail to thee, Sire of Ossian ! The Phantom was begotten by the snug embrace of an impudent Highlander upon a cloud of tradition—it travelled southward, where it was greeted with acclamation, and the thin Consistence took its course through Europe, upon the breath of popular applause. The Editor of the "*Reliques*" had indirectly preferred a claim to the praise of invention, by not concealing that his supplementary labours were considerable ! how selfish his conduct, contrasted with that of the disinterested Gael, who, like Lear, gives his kingdom away, and is content to become a pensioner upon his own issue for a beggarly pittance !—Open this far-famed Book !—I have done so at random, and the beginning of the "*Epic Poem Temora*," in eight Books, presents itself. 'The blue waves of Ullin roll in light. The green hills are covered with day. Trees shake

seriousness, doing for the Author what he had not courage openly to venture upon for himself.

their dusky heads in the breeze. Grey torrents pour their noisy streams. Two green hills with aged oaks surround a narrow plain. The blue course of a stream is there. On its banks stood Cairbar of Atha. His spear supports the king; the red eyes of his fear are sad. Cormac rises on his soul with all his ghastly wounds.' Precious memorandums from the pocket-book of the blind Ossian!

If it be unbecoming, as I acknowledge that for the most part it is, to speak disrespectfully of Works that have enjoyed for a length of time a widely-spread reputation, without at the same time producing irrefragable proofs of their unworthiness, let me be forgiven upon this occasion.—Having had the good fortune to be born and reared in a mountainous country, from my very childhood I have felt the falsehood that pervades the volumes imposed upon the world under the name of Ossian. From what I saw with my own eyes, I knew that the imagery was spurious. In nature every thing is distinct, yet nothing defined into absolute independent singleness. In Macpherson's work, it is exactly the reverse; every thing (that is not stolen) is in this manner defined, insulated, dislocated, deadened,—yet nothing distinct. It will always be so when words are substituted for things. To say that the characters never could exist, that the manners are impossible, and that a dream has more substance than the whole state of society, as there depicted, is doing nothing more than pronouncing a censure which Macpherson defied; when, with the steepes of Morven before his eyes, he could talk so familiarly of his Car-borne heroes; —of Morven, which, if one may judge from its appearance at the distance of a few miles, contains scarcely an acre of ground sufficiently accommodating for a sledge to be trailed along its surface.—Mr. Malcolm Laing has ably shown that the diction of this pretended translation is a motley assemblage from all quarters; but he is so fond of making out parallel passages as to call poor Macpherson to account for his '*ands*' and his '*buts*' and he has weakened his argument by conducting it as if he thought that every striking resemblance was a conscious plagiarism. It is enough that the coincidences are too remarkable for its being probable or possible that they could arise in different minds without communication between them. Now as the Translators of the Bible, and Shakspeare, Milton, and Pope, could not be indebted to Macpherson, it follows that he must have owed his fine feathers to them; unless we are prepared gravely to assert, with Madame de Staël, that many of the

characteristic beauties of our most celebrated English Poets are derived from the ancient Fin-gallian; in which case the modern translator would have been but giving back to Ossian his own.—It is consistent that Lucien Buonaparte, who could censure Milton for having surrounded Satan in the infernal regions with courtly and regal splendour, should pronounce the modern Ossian to be the glory of Scotland;—a country that has produced a Dunbar, a Buchanan, a Thomson, and a Burns! These opinions are of ill omen for the Epic ambition of him who has given them to the world.

Yet, much as those pretended treasures of antiquity have been admired, they have been wholly uninfluential upon the literature of the Country. No succeeding writer appears to have caught from them a ray of inspiration; no author, in the least distinguished, has ventured formally to imitate them—except the boy, Chatterton, on their first appearance. He had perceived, from the successful trials which he himself had made in literary forgery, how few critics were able to distinguish between a real ancient medal and a counterfeit of modern manufacture; and he set himself to the work of filling a magazine with *Saxon Poems*,—counterparts of those of Ossian, as like his as one of his misty stars is to another. This incapability to amalgamate with the literature of the Island, is, in my estimation, a decisive proof that the book is essentially unnatural; nor should I require any other to demonstrate it to be a forgery, audacious as worthless.—Contrast, in this respect, the effect of Macpherson's publication with the Reliques of Percy, so unassuming, so modest in their pretensions!—I have already stated how much Germany is indebted to this latter work; and for our own country, its poetry has been absolutely redeemed by it. I do not think that there is an able writer in verse of the present day who would not be proud to acknowledge his obligations to the Reliques; I know that it is so with my friends; and, for myself, I am happy in this occasion to make a public avowal of my own.

Dr. Johnson, more fortunate in his contempt of the labours of Macpherson than those of his modest friend, was solicited not long after to furnish Prefaces biographical and critical for the works of some of the most eminent English Poets. The booksellers took upon themselves to make the collection; they referred probably to the most popular miscellanies, and, unquestionably, to their books of accounts; and decided upon the claim of authors to be admitted into a body of the most eminent,

from the familiarity of their names with the readers of that day, and by the profits, which, from the sale of his works, each had brought and was bringing to the Trade. The Editor was allowed a limited exercise of discretion, and the Authors whom he recommended are scarcely to be mentioned without a smile. We open the volume of Prefatory Lives, and to our astonishment the *first* name we find is that of Cowley!—What is become of the morning-star of English Poetry? Where is the bright Elizabethan constellation? Or, if names be more acceptable than images, where is the ever-to-be-honoured Chaucer? where is Spenser? where Sidney? and, lastly, where he, whose rights as a poet, contradistinguished from those which he is universally allowed to possess as a dramatist, we have vindicated,—where Shakspeare?—These, and a multitude of others not unworthy to be placed near them, their contemporaries and successors, we have *not*. But in their stead, we have (could better be expected when precedence was to be settled by an abstract of reputation at any given period made, as in this case before us?) Roscommon, and Stepney, and Phillips, and Walsh, and Smith, and Duke, and King, and Spratt—Halifax, Granville, Sheffield, Congreve, Broome, and other reputed Magnates—metrical writers utterly worthless and useless, except for occasions like the present, when their productions are referred to as evidence what a small quantity of brain is necessary to procure a considerable stock of admiration, provided the aspirant will accommodate himself to the likings and fashions of his day.

As I do not mean to bring down this retrospect to our own times, it may with propriety be closed at the era of this distinguished event. From the literature of other ages and countries, proofs equally cogent might have been adduced, that the opinions announced in the former part of this Essay are founded upon truth. It was not an agreeable office, nor a prudent undertaking, to declare them; but their importance seemed to render it a duty. It may still be asked, where lies the particular relation of what has been said to these Volumes?—The question will be easily answered by the discerning Reader who is old enough to remember the taste that prevailed when some of these poems were first published, seventeen years ago; who has also observed to what degree the poetry of this Island has since that period been coloured by them; and who is further aware of the unremitting hostility with which, upon some principle or other, they have each and all been

opposed. A sketch of my own notion of the constitution of Fame has been given; and, as far as concerns myself, I have cause to be satisfied. The love, the admiration, the indifference, the slight, the aversion, and even the contempt, with which these Poems have been received, knowing, as I do, the source within my own mind, from which they have proceeded, and the labour and pains, which, when labour and pains appeared needful, have been bestowed upon them, must all, if I think consistently, be received as pledges and tokens, bearing the same general impression, though widely different in value;—they are all proofs that for the present time I have not laboured in vain; and afford assurances, more or less authentic, that the products of my industry will endure.

If there be one conclusion more forcibly pressed upon us than another by the review which has been given of the fortunes and fate of poetical Works, it is this,—that every author, as far as he is great and at the same time *original*, has had the task of *creating* the taste by which he is to be enjoyed: so has it been, so will it continue to be. This remark was long since made to me by the philosophical Friend for the separation of whose poems from my own I have previously expressed my regret. The predecessors of an original Genius of a high order will have smoothed the way for all that he has in common with them;—and much he will have in common; but, for what is peculiarly his own, he will be called upon to clear and often to shape his own road:—he will be in the condition of Hannibal among the Alps.

And where lies the real difficulty of creating that taste by which a truly original poet is to be relished? Is it in breaking the bonds of custom, in overcoming the prejudices of false refinement, and displacing the aversions of inexperience? Or, if he labour for an object which here and elsewhere I have proposed to myself, does it consist in divesting the reader of the pride that induces him to dwell upon those points wherein men differ from each other, to the exclusion of those in which all men are alike, or the same; and in making him ashamed of the vanity that renders him insensible of the appropriate excellence which civil arrangements, less unjust than might appear, and Nature illimitable in her bounty, have conferred on men who may stand below him in the scale of society? Finally, does it lie in establishing that dominion over the spirits of readers by which they are to be humbled and humanised, in order that they may be purified and exalted?

If these ends are to be attained by the mere communication of *knowledge*, it does *not* lie here.—TASTE, I would remind the reader, like IMAGINATION, is a word which has been forced to extend its services far beyond the point to which philosophy would have confined them. It is a metaphor, taken from a *passive* sense of the human body, and transferred to things which are in their essence *not* passive,—to intellectual *acts* and *operations*. The word, Imagination, has been overstrained, from impulses honourable to mankind, to meet the demands of the faculty which is perhaps the noblest of our nature. In the instance of Taste, the process has been reversed; and from the prevalence of dispositions at once injurious and discreditable, being no other than that selfishness which is the child of apathy,—which, as Nations decline in productive and creative power, makes them value themselves upon a presumed refinement of judging. Poverty of language is the primary cause of the use which we make of the word, Imagination; but the word, Taste, has been stretched to the sense which it bears in modern Europe by habits of self-conceit, inducing that inversion in the order of things whereby a passive faculty is made paramount among the faculties conversant with the fine arts. Proportion and congruity, the requisite knowledge being supposed, are subjects upon which taste may be trusted; it is competent to this office;—for in its intercourse with these the mind is *passive*, and is affected painfully or pleasantly as by an instinct. But the profound and the exquisite in feeling, the lofty and universal in thought and imagination; or, in ordinary language, the pathetic and the sublime;—are neither of them, accurately speaking, objects of a faculty which could ever without a sinking in the spirit of Nations have been designated by the metaphor—*Taste*. And why? Because without the exertion of a co-operating *power* in the mind of the Reader, there can be no adequate sympathy with either of these emotions: without this auxiliary impulse, elevated or profound passion cannot exist.

Passion, it must be observed, is derived from a word which signifies *suffering*; but the connection which suffering has with effort, with exertion, and *action*, is immediate and inseparable. How strikingly is this property of human nature exhibited by the fact, that, in popular language, to be in a passion, is to be angry!—But,

‘Anger in hasty words or blows
Itself discharges on its foes.’

To be moved, then, by a passion, is to be excited,

often to external, and always to internal, effort; whether for the continuance and strengthening of the passion, or for its suppression, accordingly as the course which it takes may be painful or pleasurable. If the latter, the soul must contribute to its support, or it never becomes vivid,—and soon languishes, and dies. And this brings us to the point. If every great poet with whose writings men are familiar, in the highest exercise of his genius, before he can be thoroughly enjoyed, has to call forth and to communicate *power*, this service, in a still greater degree, falls upon an original writer, at his first appearance in the world.—Of genius the only proof is, the act of doing well what is worthy to be done, and what was never done before: Of genius, in the fine arts, the only infallible sign is the widening the sphere of human sensibility, for the delight, honour, and benefit of human nature. Genius is the introduction of a new element into the intellectual universe: or, if that be not allowed, it is the application of powers to objects on which they had not before been exercised, or the employment of them in such a manner as to produce effects hitherto unknown. What is all this but an advance, or a conquest, made by the soul of the poet? Is it to be supposed that the reader can make progress of this kind, like an Indian prince or general—stretched on his palanquin, and borne by his slaves? No; he is invigorated and inspirited by his leader, in order that he may exert himself; for he cannot proceed in quiescence, he cannot be carried like a dead weight. Therefore to create taste is to call forth and bestow power, of which knowledge is the effect; and *there* lies the true difficulty.

As the pathetic participates of an *animal* sensation, it might seem—that, if the springs of this emotion were genuine, all men, possessed of competent knowledge of the facts and circumstances, would be instantaneously affected. And, doubtless, in the works of every true poet will be found passages of that species of excellence, which is proved by effects immediate and universal. But there are emotions of the pathetic that are simple and direct, and others—that are complex and revolutionary; some—to which the heart yields with gentleness; others—against which it struggles with pride; these varieties are infinite as the combinations of circumstance and the constitutions of character. Remember, also, that the medium through which, in poetry, the heart is to be affected—is language; a thing subject to endless fluctuations and arbitrary associations. The genius of the poet melts these down for

his purpose; but they retain their shape and quality to him who is not capable of exerting, within his own mind, a corresponding energy. There is also a meditative, as well as a human, pathos; an enthusiastic, as well as an ordinary, sorrow; a sadness that has its seat in the depths of reason, to which the mind cannot sink gently of itself—but to which it must descend by treading the steps of thought. And for the sublime,—if we consider what are the cares that occupy the passing day, and how remote is the practice and the course of life from the sources of sublimity in the soul of Man, can it be wondered that there is little existing preparation for a poet charged with a new mission to extend its kingdom, and to augment and spread its enjoyments?

Away, then, with the senseless iteration of the word *popular*, applied to new works in poetry, as if there were no test of excellence in this first of the fine arts but that all men should run after its productions, as if urged by an appetite, or constrained by a spell!—The qualities of writing best fitted for eager reception are either such as startle the world into attention by their audacity and extravagance; or they are chiefly of a superficial kind lying upon the surfaces of manners; or arising out of a selection and arrangement of incidents, by which the mind is kept upon the stretch of curiosity and the fancy amused without the trouble of thought. But in every thing which is to send the soul into herself, to be admonished of her weakness, or to be made conscious of her power:—wherever life and nature are described as operated upon by the creative or abstracting virtue of the imagination; wherever the instinctive wisdom of antiquity and her heroic passions uniting, in the heart of the poet, with the meditative wisdom of later ages, have produced that accord of sublimated humanity, which is at once a history of the remote past and a prophetic enunciation of the remotest future, *there*, the poet must reconcile himself for a season to few and scattered hearers. —Grand thoughts (and Shakspeare must often have sighed over this truth), as they are most naturally and most fitly conceived in solitude, so can they not be brought forth in the midst of plaudits, without some violation of their sanctity. Go to a silent exhibition of the productions of the Sister Art, and be convinced that the qualities which dazzle at first sight, and kindle the admiration of the multitude, are essentially different from those by which permanent influence is secured. Let us not shrink from following up these principles as far as they will carry us, and conclude with observing—that there never has

been a period, and perhaps never will be, in which vicious poetry, of some kind or other, has not excited more zealous admiration, and been far more generally read, than good; but this advantage attends the good, that the *individual*, as well as the species, survives from age to age; whereas, of the depraved, though the species be immortal, the individual quickly *perishes*; the object of present admiration vanishes, being supplanted by some other as easily produced; which, though no better, brings with it at least the irritation of novelty,—with adaptation, more or less skilful, to the changing humours of the majority of those who are most at leisure to regard poetical works when they first solicit their attention.

Is it the result of the whole, that, in the opinion of the Writer, the judgment of the People is not to be respected? The thought is most injurious; and, could the charge be brought against him, he would repel it with indignation. The People have already been justified, and their eulogium pronounced by implication, when it was said, above—that, of good poetry, the *individual*, as well as the species, *survives*. And how does it survive but through the People? What preserves it but their intellect and their wisdom?

‘—Past and future, are the wings
On whose support, harmoniously conjoined,
Moves the great Spirit of human knowledge—’
MS.

The voice that issues from this Spirit, is that Vox Populi which the Deity inspires. Foolish must he be who can mistake for this a local acclamation, or a transitory outcry—transitory though it be for years, local though from a Nation. Still more lamentable is his error who can believe that there is any thing of divine infallibility in the clamour of that small though loud portion of the community, ever governed by factitious influence, which, under the name of the PUBLIC, passes itself, upon the unthinking, for the PEOPLE. Towards the Public, the Writer hopes that he feels as much deference as it is entitled to: but to the People, philosophically characterised, and to the embodied spirit of their knowledge, so far as it exists and moves, at the present, faithfully supported by its two wings, the past and the future, his devout respect, his reverence, is due. He offers it willingly and readily; and, this done, takes leave of his Readers, by assuring them—that, if he were not persuaded that the contents of these Volumes, and the Work to which they are subsidiary, evince something of the ‘Vision and the Faculty divine;’ and that, both in words and things, they will operate in their degree,

to extend the domain of sensibility for the delight, the honour, and the benefit of human nature, notwithstanding the many happy hours which he has employed in their composition, and the manifold comforts and enjoyments they have procured to

him, he would not, if a wish could do it, save them from immediate destruction;—from becoming at this moment, to the world, as a thing that had never been.

1815.

DEDICATION.

PREFIXED TO THE EDITION OF 1815.

TO

SIR GEORGE HOWLAND BEAUMONT, BART.

MY DEAR SIR GEORGE,

Accept my thanks for the permission given me to dedicate these Volumes to you. In addition to a lively pleasure derived from general considerations, I feel a particular satisfaction; for, by inscribing these Poems with your Name, I seem to myself in some degree to repay, by an appropriate honour, the great obligation which I owe to one part of the Collection—as having been the means of first making us personally known to each other. Upon much of the remainder, also, you have a peculiar claim,—for some of the best pieces were composed under the shade of your own groves, upon the classic ground of Coleorton; where I was animated by the recollection of those illustrious Poets of your name and family, who were born in that neighbourhood; and, we may be assured, did not wander with indifference by the dashing stream of Grace Dieu, and among the rocks that diversify the forest of Charnwood.—Nor is there

any one to whom such parts of this Collection as have been inspired or coloured by the beautiful Country from which I now address you, could be presented with more propriety than to yourself—to whom it has suggested so many admirable pictures Early in life, the sublimity and beauty of this region excited your admiration; and I know that you are bound to it in mind by a still strengthening attachment.

Wishing and hoping that this Work, with the embellishments it has received from your pencil*, may survive as a lasting memorial of a friendship, which I reckon among the blessings of my life,

I have the honour to be,

My dear Sir George,

Yours most affectionately and faithfully,

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

RYDAL MOUNT, WESTMORELAND,

February 1, 1815.

PREFACE TO THE EDITION OF 1815.

THE powers requisite for the production of poetry are: first, those of Observation and Description,—*i. e.*, the ability to observe with accuracy things as they are in themselves, and with fidelity to describe them, unmodified by any passion or feeling existing in the mind of the describer: whether the things depicted be actually present to the senses, or have a place only in the memory.

This power, though indispensable to a Poet, is one which he employs only in submission to necessity, and never for a continuance of time: as its exercise supposes all the higher qualities of the mind to be passive, and in a state of sub-

* The state of the plates has, for some time, not allowed them to be repeated.

jection to external objects, much in the same way as a translator or engraver ought to be to his original. 2ndly, Sensibility,—which, the more exquisite it is, the wider will be the range of a poet's perceptions; and the more will he be incited to observe objects, both as they exist in themselves and as re-acted upon by his own mind. (The distinction between poetic and human sensibility has been marked in the character of the Poet delineated in the original preface.) 3dly, Reflection,—which makes the Poet acquainted with the value of actions, images, thoughts, and feelings; and assists the sensibility in perceiving their connection with each other. 4thly, Imagination and Fancy,—to modify, to create, and to associate. 5thly, Invention,—by which characters are composed out of materials supplied by observation; whether of the Poet's own heart and mind, or of external life and nature; and such incidents and situations produced as are most impressive to the imagination, and most fitted to do justice to the characters, sentiments, and passions, which the Poet undertakes to illustrate. And, lastly, Judgment,—to decide now and where, and in what degree, each of these faculties ought to be exerted; so that the less shall not be sacrificed to the greater; nor the greater, slighting the less, arrogate, to its own injury, more than its due. By judgment, also, is determined what are the laws and appropriate graces of every species of composition*.

The materials of Poetry, by these powers collected and produced, are cast, by means of various moulds, into divers forms. The moulds may be enumerated, and the forms specified, in the following order. 1st, The Narrative,—including the Epopeia, the Historic Poem, the Tale, the Romance, the Mock-heroic, and, if the spirit of Homer will tolerate such neighbourhood, that dear production of our days, the metrical Novel. Of this Class, the distinguishing mark is, that the Narrator, however liberally his speaking agents be introduced, is himself the source from which every thing primarily flows. Epic Poets, in order that their mode of composition may accord with the elevation of their subject, represent themselves as *singing* from the inspiration of the Muse, '*Arma virumque cano*;' but this is a fiction, in modern times, of slight value: the Iliad or the Paradise

Lost would gain little in our estimation by being chanted. The other poets who belong to this class are commonly content to *tell* their tale;—so that of the whole it may be affirmed that they neither require nor reject the accompaniment of music.

2ndly, The Dramatic,—consisting of Tragedy, Historic Drama, Comedy, and Masque, in which the poet does not appear at all in his own person, and where the whole action is carried on by speech and dialogue of the agents; music being admitted only incidentally and rarely. The Opera may be placed here, inasmuch as it proceeds by dialogue; though depending, to the degree that it does, upon music, it has a strong claim to be ranked with the lyrical. The characteristic and impassioned Epistle, of which Ovid and Pope have given examples, considered as a species of monodrama, may, without impropriety, be placed in this class.

3rdly, The Lyrical,—containing the Hymn, the Ode, the Elegy, the Song, and the Ballad; in all which, for the production of their *full* effect, an accompaniment of music is indispensable.

4thly, The Idyllium,—descriptive chiefly either of the processes and appearances of external nature, as the Seasons of Thomson; or of characters, manners, and sentiments, as are Shensstone's Schoolmistress, The Cotter's Saturday Night of Burns, The Twa Dogs of the same Author; or of these in conjunction with the appearances of Nature, as most of the pieces of Theocritus, the Allegro and Penseroso of Milton, Beattie's Minstrel, Goldsmith's Deserted Village. The Epitaph, the Inscription, the Sonnet, most of the epistles of poets writing in their own persons, and all loco-descriptive poetry, belong to this class.

5thly, Didactic,—the principal object of which is direct instruction; as the Poem of Lucretius, the Georgics of Virgil, The Fleece of Dyer, Mason's English Garden, &c.

And, lastly, philosophical Satire, like that of Horace and Juvenal; personal and occasional Satire rarely comprehending sufficient of the general in the individual to be dignified with the name of poetry.

Out of the three last has been constructed a composite order, of which Young's Night Thoughts, and Cowper's Task, are excellent examples.

It is deducible from the above, that poems, apparently miscellaneous, may with propriety be arranged either with reference to the powers of mind *predominant* in the production of them; or to the mould in which they are cast; or, lastly, to the subjects to which they relate. From each

* As sensibility to harmony of numbers, and the power of producing it, are invariably attendants upon the faculties above specified, nothing has been said upon those requisites.

of these considerations, the following Poems have been divided into classes; which, that the work may more obviously correspond with the course of human life, and for the sake of exhibiting in it the three requisites of a legitimate whole, a beginning, a middle, and an end, have been also arranged, as far as it was possible, according to an order of time, commencing with Childhood, and terminating with Old Age, Death, and Immortality. My guiding wish was, that the small pieces of which these volumes consist, thus discriminated, might be regarded under a two-fold view; as composing an entire work within themselves, and as adjuncts to the philosophical Poem, "The Recluse." This arrangement has long presented itself habitually to my own mind. Nevertheless, I should have preferred to scatter the contents of these volumes at random, if I had been persuaded that, by the plan adopted, any thing material would be taken from the natural effect of the pieces, individually, on the mind of the unreflecting Reader. I trust there is a sufficient variety in each class to prevent this; while, for him who reads with reflection, the arrangement will serve as a commentary unostentatiously directing his attention to my purposes, both particular and general. But, as I wish to guard against the possibility of misleading by this classification, it is proper first to remind the Reader, that certain poems are placed according to the powers of mind, in the Author's conception, predominant in the production of them; *predominant*, which implies the exertion of other faculties in less degree. Where there is more imagination than fancy in a poem, it is placed under the head of imagination, and *vice versa*. Both the above classes might without impropriety have been enlarged from that consisting of "Poems founded on the Affections;" as might this latter from those, and from the class "proceeding from Sentiment and Reflection." The most striking characteristics of each piece, mutual illustration, variety, and proportion, have governed me throughout.

None of the other Classes, except those of Fancy and Imagination, require any particular notice. But a remark of general application may be made. All Poets, except the dramatic, have been in the practice of feigning that their works were composed to the music of the harp or lyre: with what degree of affectation this has been done in modern times, I leave to the judicious to determine. For my own part, I have not been disposed to violate probability so far, or to make such a large demand upon the Reader's charity.

Some of these pieces are essentially lyrical; and, therefore, cannot have their due force without a supposed musical accompaniment; but, in much the greatest part, as a substitute for the classic lyre or romantic harp, I require nothing more than an animated or impassioned recitation, adapted to the subject. Poems, however humble in their kind, if they be good in that kind, cannot read themselves; the law of long syllable and short must not be so inflexible,—the letter of metre must not be so impassive to the spirit of versification,—as to deprive the Reader of all voluntary power to modulate, in subordination to the sense, the music of the poem;—in the same manner as his mind is left at liberty, and even summoned, to act upon its thoughts and images. But, though the accompaniment of a musical instrument be frequently dispensed with, the true Poet does not therefore abandon his privilege distinct from that of the mere Proseman;

‘He murmurs near the running brooks
A music sweeter than their own.’

Let us come now to the consideration of the words Fancy and Imagination, as employed in the classification of the following Poems. 'A man,' says an intelligent author, 'has imagination in proportion as he can distinctly copy in idea the impressions of sense: it is the faculty which *images* within the mind the phenomena of sensation. A man has fancy in proportion as he can call up, connect, or associate, at pleasure, those internal images (*φαντάσεις* is to cause to appear) so as to complete ideal representations of absent objects. Imagination is the power of depicting, and fancy of evoking and combining. The imagination is formed by patient observation; the fancy by a voluntary activity in shifting the scenery of the mind. The more accurate the imagination, the more safely may a painter, or a poet, undertake a delineation, or a description, without the presence of the objects to be characterised. The more versatile the fancy, the more original and striking will be the decorations produced.'—*British Synonyms discriminated*, by W. Taylor.

Is not this as if a man should undertake to supply an account of a building, and be so intent upon what he had discovered of the foundation, as to conclude his task without once looking up at the superstructure? Here, as in other instances throughout the volume, the judicious Author's mind is enthralled by Etymology; he takes up the original word as his guide and escort, and too often does not perceive how soon he becomes its prisoner.

without liberty to tread in any path but that to which it confines him. It is not easy to find out how imagination, thus explained, differs from distinct remembrance of images; or fancy from quick and vivid recollection of them: each is nothing more than a mode of memory. If the two words bear the above meaning, and no other, what term is left to designate that faculty of which the Poet is 'all compact;' he whose eye glances from earth to heaven, whose spiritual attributes body forth what his pen is prompt in turning to shape; or what is left to characterise Fancy, as insinuating herself into the heart of objects with creative activity?—Imagination, in the sense of the word as giving title to a class of the following Poems, has no reference to images that are merely a faithful copy, existing in the mind, of absent external objects; but is a word of higher import, denoting operations of the mind upon those objects, and processes of creation or of composition, governed by certain fixed laws. I proceed to illustrate my meaning by instances. A parrot *hangs* from the wires of his cage by his beak or by his claws; or a monkey from the bough of a tree by his paws or his tail. Each creature does so literally and actually. In the first Eclogue of Virgil, the shepherd, thinking of the time when he is to take leave of his farm, thus addresses his goats:—

'Non ego vos posthac viridi projectus in antro
Dumosa pendere procul de rupe videbo.'

————— 'half way down
Hangs one who gathers samphire,'

is the well-known expression of Shakspeare, delineating an ordinary image upon the cliffs of Dover. In these two instances is a slight exertion of the faculty which I denominate imagination, in the use of one word: neither the goats nor the samphire-gatherer do literally hang, as does the parrot or the monkey; but, presenting to the senses something of such an appearance, the mind in its activity, for its own gratification, contemplates them as hanging.

'As when far off at sea a fleet descried
Hangs in the clouds, by equinoctial winds
Close sailing from Bengala, or the isles
Of Ternate or Tidore, whence merchants bring
Their spicy drugs; they on the trading flood
Through the wide Ethiopian to the Cape
Ply, stemming nightly toward the Pole; so seemed
Far off the flying Fiend.'

Here is the full strength of the imagination involved in the word *hangs*, and exerted upon the whole image: First, the fleet, an aggregate of

many ships, is represented as one mighty person, whose track, we know and feel, is upon the waters; but, taking advantage of its appearance to the senses, the Poet dares to represent it as *hanging in the clouds*, both for the gratification of the mind in contemplating the image itself, and in reference to the motion and appearance of the sublime objects to which it is compared.

From impressions of sight we will pass to those of sound; which, as they must necessarily be of a less definite character, shall be selected from these volumes:

'Over his own sweet voice the Stock-dove broods.'

of the same bird,

'His voice was *buried* among trees,
Yet to be come at by the breeze;'

'O, Cuckoo! shall I call thee *Bird*,
Or but a wandering *Voice*?'

The stock-dove is said to *coo*, a sound well imitating the note of the bird; but, by the intervention of the metaphor *broods*, the affections are called in by the imagination to assist in marking the manner in which the bird reiterates and prolongs her soft note, as if herself delighting to listen to it, and participating of a still and quiet satisfaction, like that which may be supposed inseparable from the continuous process of incubation. 'His voice was buried among trees,' a metaphor expressing the love of *seclusion* by which this Bird is marked; and characterising its note as not partaking of the shrill and the piercing, and therefore more easily deadened by the intervening shade; yet a note so peculiar and withal so pleasing, that the breeze, gifted with that love of the sound which the Poet feels, penetrates the shades in which it is entombed, and conveys it to the ear of the listener.

'Shall I call thee Bird,
Or but a wandering Voice?

This concise interrogation characterises the seeming ubiquity of the voice of the cuckoo, and dispossesses the creature almost of a corporeal existence; the Imagination being tempted to this exertion of her power by a consciousness in the memory that the cuckoo is almost perpetually heard throughout the season of spring, but seldom becomes an object of sight.

Thus far of images independent of each other, and immediately endowed by the mind with properties that do not inhere in them, upon an incitement from properties and qualities the existence of which is inherent and obvious. These processes of

imagination are carried on either by conferring additional properties upon an object, or abstracting from it some of those which it actually possesses, and thus enabling it to re-act upon the mind which hath performed the process, like a new existence.

I pass from the Imagination acting upon an individual image to a consideration of the same faculty employed upon images in a conjunction by which they modify each other. The Reader has already had a fine instance before him in the passage quoted from Virgil, where the apparently perilous situation of the goat, hanging upon the shaggy precipice, is contrasted with that of the shepherd contemplating it from the seclusion of the cavern in which he lies stretched at ease and in security. Take these images separately, and how unaffecting the picture compared with that produced by their being thus connected with, and opposed to, each other !

'As a huge stone is sometimes seen to lie
Couched on the bald top of an eminence,
Wonder to all who do the same espy
By what means it could thither come, and whence,
So that it seems a thing endued with sense,
Like a sea-beast crawled forth, which on a shelf
Of rock or sand reposes, there to sun himself.

Such seemed this Man ; not all alive or dead
Nor all asleep, in his extreme old age.

* * * * *
Motionless as a cloud the old Man stood,
That heareth not the loud winds when they call,
And moveth altogether if it move at all.'

In these images, the conferring, the abstracting, and the modifying powers of the Imagination, immediately and mediately acting, are all brought into conjunction. The stone is endowed with something of the power of life to approximate it to the sea-beast ; and the sea-beast stripped of some of its vital qualities to assimilate it to the stone ; which intermediate image is thus treated for the purpose of bringing the original image, that of the stone, to a nearer resemblance to the figure and condition of the aged Man ; who is divested of so much of the indications of life and motion as to bring him to the point where the two objects unite and coalesce in just comparison. After what has been said, the image of the cloud need not be commented upon.

Thus far of an endowing or modifying power : but the Imagination also shapes and *creates* ; and how ? By innumerable processes ; and in none does it more delight than in that of consolidating numbers into unity, and dissolving and separating unity into number,—alternations proceeding from,

and governed by, a sublime consciousness of the soul in her own mighty and almost divine powers. Recur to the passage already cited from Milton. When the compact Fleet, as one Person, has been introduced 'Sailing from Bengala.' 'They,' *i. e.* the 'merchants,' representing the fleet resolved into a multitude of ships, 'ply' their voyage towards the extremities of the earth : 'So' (referring to the word 'As' in the commencement) 'seemed the flying Fiend ;' the image of his Person acting to recombine the multitude of ships into one body,—the point from which the comparison set out. 'So seemed,' and to whom seemed ? To the heavenly Muse who dictates the poem, to the eye of the Poet's mind, and to that of the Reader, present at one moment in the wide Ethiopian, and the next in the solitudes, then first broken in upon, of the infernal regions !

'Modo me Thebis, modo ponit A'heniz.'

Hear again this mighty Poet,—speaking of the Messiah going forth to expel from heaven the rebellious angels,

'Attended by ten thousand thousand Saints
He onward came : far off his coming shone,—

the retinue of Saints, and the Person of the Messiah himself, lost almost and merged in the splendour of that indefinite abstraction 'His coming !'

As I do not mean here to treat this subject further than to throw some light upon the present Volumes, and especially upon one division of them, I shall spare myself and the Reader the trouble of considering the Imagination as it deals with thoughts and sentiments, as it regulates the composition of characters, and determines the course of actions : I will not consider it (more than I have already done by implication) as that power which, in the language of one of my most esteemed Friends, 'draws all things to one ; which makes things animate or inanimate, beings with their attributes, subjects with their accessories, take one colour and serve to one effect*.' The grand store-houses of enthusiastic and meditative Imagination, of poetical, as contradistinguished from human and dramatic Imagination, are the prophetic and lyrical parts of the Holy Scriptures, and the works of Milton ; to which I cannot forbear to add those of Spenser. I select these writers in preference to those of ancient Greece and Rome,

* Charles Lamb upon the genius of Hogarth.

because the anthropomorphism of the Pagan religion subjected the minds of the greatest poets in those countries too much to the bondage of definite form; from which the Hebrews were preserved by their abhorrence of idolatry. This abhorrence was almost as strong in our great epic Poet, both from circumstances of his life, and from the constitution of his mind. However imbued the surface might be with classical literature, he was a Hebrew in soul; and all things tended in him towards the sublime. Spenser, of a gentler nature, maintained his freedom by aid of his allegorical spirit, at one time inciting him to create persons out of abstractions; and, at another, by a superior effort of genius, to give the universality and permanence of abstractions to his human beings, by means of attributes and emblems that belong to the highest moral truths and the purest sensations,—of which his character of *Una* is a glorious example. Of the human and dramatic Imagination the works of Shakspeare are an inexhaustible source.

‘I tax not you, ye Elements, with unkindness,
I never gave you kingdoms, call’d you Daughters!’

And if, bearing in mind the many Poets distinguished by this prime quality, whose names I omit to mention; yet justified by recollection of the insults which the ignorant, the incapable, and the presumptuous, have heaped upon these and my other writings, I may be permitted to anticipate the judgment of posterity upon myself, I shall declare (censurable, I grant, if the notoriety of the fact above stated does not justify me) that I have given in these unfavourable times, evidence of exertions of this faculty upon its worthiest objects, the external universe, the moral and religious sentiments of Man, his natural affections, and his acquired passions; which have the same ennobling tendency as the productions of men, in this kind, worthy to be holden in undying remembrance.

To the mode in which Fancy has already been characterised as the power of evoking and combining, or, as my friend Mr. Coleridge has styled it, ‘the aggregative and associative power,’ my objection is only that the definition is too general. To aggregate and to associate, to evoke and to combine, belong as well to the Imagination as to the Fancy; but either the materials evoked and combined are different; or they are brought together under a different law, and for a different purpose. Fancy does not require that the materials which she makes use of should be susceptible of change in their constitution, from her touch;

and, where they admit of modification, it is enough for her purpose if it be slight, limited, and evanescent. Directly the reverse of these, are the desires and demands of the Imagination. She recoils from every thing but the plastic, the pliant, and the indefinite. She leaves it to Fancy to describe Queen Mab as coming,

‘In shape no bigger than an agate-stone
On the fore-finger of an alderman.’

Having to speak of stature, she does not tell you that her gigantic Angel was as tall as Pompey’s Pillar; much less that he was twelve cubits, or twelve hundred cubits high; or that his dimensions equalled those of Teneriffe or Atlas;—because these, and if they were a million times as high it would be the same, are bounded: The expression is, ‘His stature reached the sky!’ the illimitable firmament!—When the Imagination frames a comparison, if it does not strike on the first presentation, a sense of the truth of the likeness, from the moment that it is perceived, grows—and continues to grow—upon the mind; the resemblance depending less upon outline of form and feature, than upon expression and effect; less upon casual and outstanding, than upon inherent and internal, properties: moreover, the images invariably modify each other.—The law under which the processes of Fancy are carried on is as capricious as the accidents of things, and the effects are surprising, playful, ludicrous, amusing, tender, or pathetic, as the objects happen to be appositely produced or fortunately combined. Fancy depends upon the rapidity and profusion with which she scatters her thoughts and images; trusting that their number, and the felicity with which they are linked together, will make amends for the want of individual value: or she prides herself upon the curious subtilty and the successful elaboration with which she can detect their lurking affinities. If she can win you over to her purpose, and impart to you her feelings, she cares not how unstable or transitory may be her influence, knowing that it will not be out of her power to resume it upon an apt occasion. But the Imagination is conscious of an indestructible dominion;—the Soul may fall away from it, not being able to sustain its grandeur; but, if once felt and acknowledged, by no act of any other faculty of the mind can it be relaxed, impaired, or diminished.—Fancy is given to quicken and to beguile the temporal part of our nature, Imagination to incite and to support the eternal.—Yet is it not the less true that Fancy, as she is an

active, is also, under her own laws and in her own spirit, a creative faculty. In what manner Fancy ambitiously aims at a rivalry with Imagination, and Imagination stoops to work with the materials of Fancy, might be illustrated from the compositions of all eloquent writers, whether in prose or verse; and chiefly from those of our own Country. Scarcely a page of the impassioned parts of Bishop Taylor's Works can be opened that shall not afford examples.—Referring the Reader to those inestimable volumes, I will content myself with placing a conceit (ascribed to Lord Chesterfield) in contrast with a passage from the *Paradise Lost* :—

'The dews of the evening most carefully shun,
They are the tears of the sky for the loss of the sun.

After the transgression of Adam, Milton, with other appearances of sympathising Nature, thus marks the immediate consequence,

'Sky lowered, and, muttering thunder, some sad drops
Wept at completion of the mortal sin.'

The associating link is the same in each instance: Dew and rain, not distinguishable from the liquid substance of tears, are employed as indications of sorrow. A flash of surprise is the effect in the former case; a flash of surprise, and nothing more; for the nature of things does not sustain the combination. In the latter, the effects from the act, of which there is this immediate consequence and visible sign, are so momentous, that the mind acknowledges the justice and reasonableness of the sympathy in nature so manifested; and the sky weeps drops of water as if with human eyes, as 'Earth had before trembled from her entrails, and Nature given a second groan.'

Finally, I will refer to Cotton's "Ode upon Winter," an admirable composition, though stained with some peculiarities of the age in which he lived, for a general illustration of the characteristics of Fancy. The middle part of this ode contains a most lively description of the entrance of Winter, with his retinue, as 'A palsied king,' and yet a military monarch,—advancing for conquest with his army; the several bodies of which, and their arms and equipments, are described with a rapidity of detail, and a profusion of *fanciful* comparisons, which indicate on the part of the poet extreme activity of intellect, and a correspondent hurry of delightful feeling. Winter retires from the foe into his fortress, where

——— 'a magazine
Of sovereign juice is cellared in;
Liquor that will the siege maintain
Should Phœbus ne'er return again.'

Though myself a water-drinker, I cannot resist the pleasure of transcribing what follows, as an instance still more happy of Fancy employed in the treatment of feeling than, in its preceding passages, the Poem supplies of her management of forms.

'Tis that, that gives the poet rage,
And thaws the gelly'd blood of age;
Matures the young, restores the old,
And makes the fainting coward bold.

It lays the careful head to rest,
Calms palpitations in the breast,
Renders our lives' misfortune sweet;

* * * * *

Then let the chill Sirocco blow,
And gird us round with hills of snow,
Or else go whistle to the shore,
And make the hollow mountains roar,

Whilst we together jovial sit
Careless, and crowned with mirth and wit,
Where, though bleak winds confine us home,
Our fancies round the world shall roam.

We'll think of all the Friends we know,
And drink to all worth drinking to;
When having drunk all thine and mine,
We rather shall want health than wine.

But where Friends fail us, we'll supply
Our friendships with our charity;
Men that remote in sorrows live,
Shall by our lusty brimmers thrive.

We'll drink the wanting into wealth,
And those that languish into health,
The afflicted into joy; th'oppress
Into security and rest.

The worthy in disgrace shall find
Favour return again more kind,
And in restraint who stifled lie,
Shall taste the air of liberty.

The brave shall triumph in success,
The lovers shall have mistresses,
Poor unregarded Virtue, praise,
And the neglected Poet, bays.

Thus shall our healths do others good,
Whilst we ourselves do all we would;
For, freed from envy and from care,
What would we be but what we are?'

When I sat down to write this Preface, it was my intention to have made it more comprehensive; but, thinking that I ought rather to apologise for detaining the reader so long, I will here conclude.

POSTSCRIPT.

1835.

IN the present volume, as in those that have preceded it, the reader will have found occasionally opinions expressed upon the course of public affairs, and feelings given vent to as national interests excited them. Since nothing, I trust, has been uttered but in the spirit of reflective patriotism, those notices are left to produce their own effect; but, among the many objects of general concern, and the changes going forward, which I have glanced at in verse, are some especially affecting the lower orders of society: in reference to these, I wish here to add a few words in plain prose.

Were I conscious of being able to do justice to those important topics, I might avail myself of the periodical press for offering anonymously my thoughts, such as they are, to the world; but I feel that, in procuring attention, they may derive some advantage, however small, from my name, in addition to that of being presented in a less fugitive shape. It is also not impossible that the state of mind which some of the foregoing poems may have produced in the reader, will dispose him to receive more readily the impression which I desire to make, and to admit the conclusions I would establish.

I. The first thing that presses upon my attention is the Poor-Law Amendment Act. I am aware of the magnitude and complexity of the subject, and the unwearied attention which it has received from men of far wider experience than my own; yet I cannot forbear touching upon one point of it, and to this I will confine myself, though not insensible to the objection which may reasonably be brought against treating a portion of this, or any other, great scheme of civil polity separately from the whole. The point to which I wish to draw the reader's attention is, that *all* persons who cannot find employment, or procure wages sufficient to support the body in health and strength, are entitled to a maintenance by law.

This dictate of humanity is acknowledged in the Report of the Commissioners: but is there not room for apprehension that some of the regulations of the new act have a tendency to render the prin-

ciple nugatory by difficulties thrown in the way of applying it? If this be so, persons will not be wanting to show it, by examining the provisions of the act in detail,—an attempt which would be quite out of place here; but it will not, therefore, be deemed unbecoming in one who fears that the prudence of the head may, in framing some of those provisions, have supplanted the wisdom of the heart, to enforce a principle which cannot be violated without infringing upon one of the most precious rights of the English people, and opposing one of the most sacred claims of civilised humanity.

There can be no greater error, in this department of legislation, than the belief that this principle does by necessity operate for the degradation of those who claim, or are so circumstanced as to make it likely they may claim, through laws founded upon it, relief or assistance. The direct contrary is the truth: it may be unanswerably maintained that its tendency is to raise, not to depress; by stamping a value upon life, which can belong to it only where the laws have placed men who are willing to work, and yet cannot find employment, above the necessity of looking for protection against hunger and other natural evils, either to individual and casual charity, to despair and death, or to the breach of law by theft, or violence.

And here, as in the Report of the Commissioners, the fundamental principle has been recognised, I am not at issue with them any farther than I am compelled to believe that their 'remedial measures' obstruct the application of it more than the interests of society require.

And, calling to mind the doctrines of political economy which are now prevalent, I cannot forbear to enforce the justice of the principle, and to insist upon its salutary operation.

And first for its justice: If self-preservation be the first law of our nature, would not every one in a state of nature be morally justified in taking to himself that which is indispensable to such preservation, where, by so doing, he would not rob another of that which might be equally

indispensable to *his* preservation? And if the value of life be regarded in a right point of view, may it not be questioned whether this right of preserving life, at any expense short of endangering the life of another, does not survive man's entering into the social state; whether this right can be surrendered or forfeited, except when it opposes the divine law, upon any supposition of a social compact, or of any convention for the protection of mere rights of property?

But, if it be not safe to touch the abstract question of man's right in a social state to help himself even in the last extremity, may we not still contend for the duty of a christian government, standing in *loco parentis* towards all its subjects, to make such effectual provision, that no one shall be in danger of perishing either through the neglect or harshness of its legislation? Or, waiving this, is it not indisputable that the claim of the state to the allegiance, involves the protection, of the subject? And, as all rights in one party impose a correlative duty upon another, it follows that the right of the state to require the services of its members, even to the jeopardizing of their lives in the common defence, establishes a right in the people (not to be gainsaid by utilitarians and economists) to public support when, from any cause, they may be unable to support themselves.

Let us now consider the salutary and benign operation of this principle. Here we must have recourse to elementary feelings of human nature, and to truths which from their very obviousness are apt to be slighted, till they are forced upon our notice by our own sufferings or those of others. In the *Paradise Lost*, Milton represents Adam, after the Fall, as exclaiming, in the anguish of his soul—

'Did I request Thee, Maker, from my clay
To mould me man; did I solicit Thee
From darkness to promote me?

My will
Concurred not to my being.'

Under how many various pressures of misery have men been driven thus, in a strain touching upon impiety, to expostulate with the Creator! and under few so afflictive as when the source and origin of earthly existence have been brought back to the mind by its impending close in the pangs of destitution. But as long as, in our legislation, due weight shall be given to this principle, no man will be forced to bewail the gift of life in hopeless want of the necessaries of life.

Englishmen have, therefore, by the progress of civilisation among them, been placed in cir-

cumstances more favourable to piety and resignation to the divine will, than the inhabitants of other countries, where a like provision has not been established. And as Providence, in this care of our countrymen, acts through a human medium, the objects of that care must, in like manner, be more inclined towards a grateful love of their fellow-men. Thus, also, do stronger ties attach the people to their country, whether while they tread its soil, or, at a distance, think of their native land as an indulgent parent, to whose arms, even they who have been imprudent and undeserving may, like the prodigal son, betake themselves, without fear of being rejected.

Such is the view of the case that would first present itself to a reflective mind; and it is in vain to show, by appeals to experience, in contrast with this view, that provisions founded upon the principle have promoted profaneness of life, and dispositions the reverse of philanthropic, by spreading idleness, selfishness, and rapacity: for these evils have arisen, not as an inevitable consequence of the principle, but for want of judgment in framing laws based upon it; and, above all, from faults in the mode of administering the law. The mischief that has grown to such a height from granting relief in cases where proper vigilance would have shown that it was not required, or in bestowing it in undue measure, will be urged by no truly enlightened statesman, as a sufficient reason for banishing the principle itself from legislation.

Let us recur to the miserable states of consciousness that it precludes.

There is a story told, by a traveller in Spain, of a female who, by a sudden shock of domestic calamity, was driven out of her senses, and ever after looked up incessantly to the sky, feeling that her fellow-creatures could do nothing for her relief. Can there be Englishmen who, with a good end in view, would, upon system, expose their brother Englishmen to a like necessity of looking upwards only; or downwards to the earth, after it shall contain no spot where the destitute can demand, by civil right, what by right of nature they are entitled to?

Suppose the objects of our sympathy not sunk into this blank despair, but wandering about as strangers in streets and ways, with the hope of succour from casual charity; what have we gained by such a change of scene? Woful is the condition of the famished Northern Indian, dependent, among winter snows, upon the chance-passage of a herd of deer, from which one, if brought down

by his rifle-gun, may be made the means of keeping him and his companions alive. As miserable is that of some savage Islander, who, when the land has ceased to afford him sustenance, watches for food which the waves may cast up, or in vain endeavours to extract it from the inexplorable deep. But neither of these is in a state of wretchedness comparable to that, which is so often endured in civilised society: multitudes, in all ages, have known it, of whom may be said:—

‘Homeless, near a thousand homes they stood,
And near a thousand tables pined, and wanted food.’

Justly might I be accused of wasting time in an uncalled-for attempt to excite the feelings of the reader, if systems of political economy, widely spread, did not impugn the principle, and if the safeguards against such extremities were left unimpaired. It is broadly asserted by many, that every man who endeavours to find work, *may* find it: were this assertion capable of being verified, there still would remain a question, what kind of work, and how far may the labourer be fit for it? For if sedentary work is to be exchanged for standing; and some light and nice exercise of the fingers, to which an artisan has been accustomed all his life, for severe labour of the arms; the best efforts would turn to little account, and occasion would be given for the unthinking and the unfeeling unwarrantably to reproach those who are put upon such employment, as idle, froward, and unworthy of relief, either by law or in any other way! Were this statement correct, there would indeed be an end of the argument, the principle here maintained would be superseded. But, alas! it is far otherwise. That principle, applicable to the benefit of all countries, is indispensable for England, upon whose coast families are perpetually deprived of their support by shipwreck, and where large masses of men are so liable to be thrown out of their ordinary means of gaining bread, by changes in commercial intercourse, subject mainly or solely to the will of foreign powers; by new discoveries in arts and manufactures; and by reckless laws, in conformity with theories of political economy, which, whether right or wrong in the abstract, have proved a scourge to tens of thousands, by the abruptness with which they have been carried into practice.

But it is urged,—refuse altogether compulsory relief to the able-bodied, and the number of those who stand in need of relief will steadily diminish through a conviction of an absolute necessity for

greater forethought, and more prudent care of a man's earnings. Undoubtedly it would, but so also would it, and in a much greater degree, if the legislative provisions were retained, and parochial relief administered under the care of the upper classes, as it ought to be. For it has been invariably found, that wherever the funds have been raised and applied under the superintendence of gentlemen and substantial proprietors, acting in vestries, and as overseers, pauperism has diminished accordingly. Proper care in that quarter would effectually check what is felt in some districts to be one of the worst evils in the poor law system, viz. the readiness of small and needy proprietors to join in imposing rates that seemingly subject them to great hardships, while, in fact, this is done with a mutual understanding, that the relief each is ready to bestow upon his still poorer neighbours will be granted to himself, or his relatives, should it hereafter be applied for.

But let us look to inner sentiments of a nobler quality, in order to know what we have to build upon. Affecting proofs occur in every one's experience, who is acquainted with the unfortunate and the indigent, of their unwillingness to derive their subsistence from aught but their own funds or labour, or to be indebted to parochial assistance for the attainment of any object, however dear to them. A case was reported, the other day, from a coroner's inquest, of a pair who, through the space of four years, had carried about their dead infant from house to house, and from lodging to lodging, as their necessities drove them, rather than ask the parish to bear the expense of its interment:—the poor creatures lived in the hope of one day being able to bury their child at their own cost. It must have been heart-rending to see and hear the mother, who had been called upon to account for the state in which the body was found, make this deposition. By some, judging coldly, if not harshly, this conduct might be imputed to an unwarrantable pride, as she and her husband had, it is true, been once in prosperity. But examples, where the spirit of independence works with equal strength, though not with like miserable accompaniments, are frequently to be found even yet among the humblest peasantry and mechanics. There is not, then, sufficient cause for doubting that a like sense of honour may be revived among the people, and their ancient habits of independence restored, without resorting to those severities which the new Poor Law Act has introduced.

But even if the surfaces of things only are to be examined, we have a right to expect that lawgivers

should take into account the various tempers and dispositions of mankind: while some are led, by the existence of a legislative provision, into idleness and extravagance, the economical virtues might be cherished in others by the knowledge that, if all their efforts fail, they have in the Poor Laws a 'refuge from the storm and a shadow from the heat.' Despondency and distraction are no friends to prudence: the springs of industry will relax, if cheerfulness be destroyed by anxiety; without hope men become reckless, and have a sullen pride in adding to the heap of their own wretchedness. He who feels that he is abandoned by his fellow-men will be almost irresistibly driven to care little for himself; will lose his self-respect accordingly, and with that loss what remains to him of virtue?

With all due deference to the particular experience, and general intelligence of the individuals who framed the Act, and of those who in and out of parliament have approved of and supported it; it may be said, that it proceeds too much upon the presumption that it is a labouring man's own fault if he be not, as the phrase is, beforehand with the world. But the most prudent are liable to be thrown back by sickness, cutting them off from labour, and causing to them expense: and who but has observed how distress creeps upon multitudes without misconduct of their own; and merely from a gradual fall in the price of labour, without a correspondent one in the price of provisions; so that men who may have ventured upon the marriage state with a fair prospect of maintaining their families in comfort and happiness, see them reduced to a pittance which no effort of theirs can increase? Let it be remembered, also, that there are thousands with whom vicious habits of expense are not the cause why they do not store up their gains; but they are generous and kind-hearted, and ready to help their kindred and friends; moreover, they have a faith in Providence that those who have been prompt to assist others, will not be left destitute, should they themselves come to need. By acting from these blended feelings, numbers have rendered themselves incapable of standing up against a sudden reverse. Nevertheless, these men, in common with all who have the misfortune to be in want, if many theorists had their wish, would be thrown upon one or other of those three sharp points of condition before adverted to, from which the intervention of law has hitherto saved them.

All that has been said tends to show how the principle contended for makes the gift of life more

valuable, and has, it may be hoped, led to the conclusion that its legitimate operation is to make men worthier of that gift: in other words, not to degrade but to exalt human nature. But the subject must not be dismissed without adverting to the indirect influence of the same principle upon the moral sentiments of a people among whom it is embodied in law. In our criminal jurisprudence there is a maxim, deservedly eulogised, that it is better that ten guilty persons should escape, than that one innocent man should suffer; so, also, might it be maintained, with regard to the Poor Laws, that it is better for the interests of humanity among the people at large, that ten undeserving should partake of the funds provided, than that one morally good man, through want of relief, should either have his principles corrupted, or his energies destroyed; than that such a one should either be driven to do wrong, or be cast to the earth in utter hopelessness. In France, the English maxim of criminal jurisprudence is reversed; there, it is deemed better that ten innocent men should suffer, than one guilty escape: in France, there is no universal provision for the poor; and we may judge of the small value set upon human life in the metropolis of that country, by merely noticing the disrespect with which, after death, the body is treated, not by the thoughtless vulgar, but in schools of anatomy, presided over by men allowed to be, in their own art and in physical science, among the most enlightened in the world. In the East, where countries are overrun with population as with a weed, infinitely more respect is shown to the remains of the deceased; and what a bitter mockery is it, that this insensibility should be found where civil polity is so busy in minor regulations, and ostentatiously careful to gratify the luxurious propensities, whether social or intellectual, of the multitude! Irreligion is, no doubt, much concerned with this offensive disrespect, shown to the bodies of the dead in France; but it is mainly attributable to the state in which so many of the living are left by the absence of compulsory provision for the indigent so humanely established by the law of England.

Sights of abject misery, perpetually recurring, harden the heart of the community. In the perusal of history, and of works of fiction, we are not, indeed, unwilling to have our commiseration excited by such objects of distress as they present to us; but, in the concerns of real life, men know that such emotions are not given to be indulged for their own sakes: there, the conscience declares to them that sympathy must be followed by action; and if there exist a previous conviction

that the power to relieve is utterly inadequate to the demand, the eye shrinks from communication with wretchedness, and pity and compassion languish, like any other qualities that are deprived of their natural aliment. Let these considerations be duly weighed by those who trust to the hope that an increase of private charity, with all its advantages of superior discrimination, would more than compensate for the abandonment of those principles, the wisdom of which has been here insisted upon. How discouraging, also, would be the sense of injustice, which could not fail to arise in the minds of the well-disposed, if the burden of supporting the poor, a burden of which the selfish have hitherto by compulsion borne a share, should now, or hereafter, be thrown exclusively upon the benevolent.

By having put an end to the Slave Trade and Slavery, the British people are exalted in the scale of humanity; and they cannot but feel so, if they look into themselves, and duly consider their relation to God and their fellow-creatures. That was a noble advance; but a retrograde movement will assuredly be made, if ever the principle, which has been here defended, should be either avowedly abandoned or but ostensibly retained.

But after all, there may be a little reason to apprehend permanent injury from any experiment that may be tried. On the one side will be human nature rising up in her own defence, and on the other prudential selfishness acting to the same purpose, from a conviction that, without a compulsory provision for the exigencies of the labouring multitude, that degree of ability to regulate the price of labour, which is indispensable for the reasonable interest of arts and manufactures, cannot, in Great Britain, be upheld.

II. In a poem of the foregoing collection, allusion is made to the state of the workmen congregated in manufactories. In order to relieve many of the evils to which that class of society are subject and to establish a better harmony between them and their employers, it would be well to repeal such laws as prevent the formation of joint-stock companies. There are, no doubt, many and great obstacles to the formation and salutary working of these societies, inherent in the mind of those whom they would obviously benefit. But the combinations of masters to keep down, unjustly, the price of labour would be fairly checked by them, as far as they were practicable; they would encourage economy, inasmuch as they would enable a man to

draw profit from his savings, by investing them in buildings or machinery for processes of manufacture with which he was habitually connected. His little capital would then be working for him while he was at rest or asleep; he would more clearly perceive the necessity of capital for carrying on great works; he would better learn to respect the larger portions of it in the hands of others; he would be less tempted to join in unjust combinations; and, for the sake of his own property, if not for higher reasons, he would be slow to promote local disturbance, or endanger public tranquillity; he would, at least, be loth to act in that way *knowingly*: for it is not to be denied that such societies might be nurseries of opinions unfavourable to a mixed constitution of government, like that of Great Britain. The democratic and republican spirit which they might be apt to foster would not, however, be dangerous in itself, but only as it might act without being sufficiently counterbalanced, either by landed proprietorship, or by a Church extending itself so as to embrace an ever-growing and ever-shifting population of mechanics and artisans. But if the tendencies of such societies would be to make the men prosper who might belong to them, rulers and legislators should rejoice in the result, and do their duty to the state by upholding and extending the influence of that Church to which it owes, in so great a measure, its safety, its prosperity, and its glory.

This, in the temper of the present times, may be difficult, but it is become indispensable, since large towns in great numbers have sprung up, and others have increased tenfold, with little or no dependence upon the gentry and the landed proprietors; and apart from those mitigated feudal institutions, which, till of late, have acted so powerfully upon the composition of the House of Commons. Now it may be affirmed that, in quarters where there is not an attachment to the Church, or the landed aristocracy, and a pride in supporting them, *there* the people will dislike both, and be ready, upon such incitements as are perpetually recurring, to join in attempts to overthrow them. There is no neutral ground here: from want of due attention to the state of society in large towns and manufacturing districts, and ignorance or disregard of these obvious truths, innumerable well-meaning persons became zealous supporters of a Reform Bill, the qualities and powers of which, whether destructive or constructive, they would otherwise have been afraid of; and even the framers of that bill, swayed as they might be by party resentments and personal ambition,

could not have gone so far, had not they too been lamentably ignorant or neglectful of the same truths both of fact and philosophy.

But let that pass ; and let no opponent of the bill be tempted to compliment his own foresight, by exaggerating the mischiefs and dangers that have sprung from it : let not time be wasted in profitless regrets ; and let those party distinctions vanish to their very names that have separated men who, whatever course they may have pursued, have ever had a bond of union in the wish to save the limited monarchy, and those other institutions that have, under Providence, rendered for so long a period of time this country the happiest and worthiest of which there is any record since the foundation of civil society.

III. A philosophic mind is best pleased when looking at religion in its spiritual bearing ; as a guide of conduct, a solace under affliction, and a support amid the instabilities of mortal life : but the Church having been forcibly brought by political considerations to my notice, while treating of the labouring classes, I cannot forbear saying a few words upon that momentous topic.

There is a loud clamour for extensive change in that department. The clamour would be entitled to more respect if they who are the most eager to swell it with their voices were not generally the most ignorant of the real state of the Church, and the service it renders to the community. *Reform* is the word employed. Let us pause and consider what sense it is apt to carry, and how things are confounded by a lax use of it. The great religious Reformation, in the sixteenth century, did not profess to be a new construction, but a restoration of something fallen into decay, or put out of sight. That familiar and justifiable use of the word seems to have paved the way for fallacies with respect to the term reform, which it is difficult to escape from. Were we to speak of improvement, and the correction of abuses, we should run less risk of being deceived ourselves, or of misleading others. We should be less likely to fall blindly into the belief, that the change demanded is a renewal of something that has existed before, and that, therefore, we have experience on our side ; nor should we be equally tempted to beg the question, that the change for which we are eager must be advantageous. From generation to generation, men are the dupes of words ; and it is painful to observe, that so many of our species are most tenacious of those opinions which they have formed with the least consideration. They who are the readiest to

meddle with public affairs, whether in church or state, fly to generalities, that they may be eased from the trouble of thinking about particulars ; and thus is deputed to mechanical instrumentality the work which vital knowledge only can do well.

"Abolish pluralities, have a resident incumbent in every parish," is a favourite cry ; but, without adverting to other obstacles in the way of this specious scheme, it may be asked what benefit would accrue from its *indiscriminate* adoption to counterbalance the harm it would introduce, by nearly extinguishing the order of curates, unless the revenues of the church should grow with the population, and be greatly increased in many thinly peopled districts, especially among the parishes of the North.

The order of curates is so beneficial, that some particular notice of it seems to be required in this place. For a church poor as, relatively to the numbers of people, that of England is, and probably will continue to be, it is no small advantage to have youthful servants, who will work upon the wages of hope and expectation. Still more advantageous is it to have, by means of this order, young men scattered over the country, who being more detached from the temporal concerns of the benefice, have more leisure for improvement and study, and are less subject to be brought into secular collision with those who are under their spiritual guardianship. The curate, if he reside at a distance from the incumbent, undertakes the requisite responsibilities of a temporal kind, in that modified way which prevents him, as a new-comer, from being charged with selfishness : while it prepares him for entering upon a benefice of his own, with something of a suitable experience. If he should act under and in co-operation with a resident incumbent, the gain is mutual. His studies will probably be assisted ; and his training, managed by a superior, will not be liable to relapse in matters of prudence, seemliness, or in any of the highest cares of his functions ; and by way of return for these benefits to the pupil, it will often happen that the zeal of a middle-aged or declining incumbent will be revived, by being in near communion with the ardour of youth, when his own efforts may have languished through a melancholy consciousness that they have not produced as much good among his flock as, when he first entered upon the charge, he fondly hoped.

Let one remark, and that not the least important, be added. A curate, entering for the first time upon his office, comes from college after a course of expense, and with such inexperience in

the use of money, that, in his new situation, he is apt to fall unawares into pecuniary difficulties. If this happens to him, much more likely is it to happen to the youthful incumbent; whose relations, to his parishioners and to society, are more complicated; and, his income being larger and independent of another, a costlier style of living is required of him by public opinion. If embarrassment should ensue, and with that unavoidably some loss of respectability, his future usefulness will be proportionably impaired: not so with the curate, for he can easily remove and start afresh with a stock of experience and an unblemished reputation; whereas the early indiscretions of an incumbent being rarely forgotten, may be impediments to the efficacy of his ministry for the remainder of his life. The same observations would apply with equal force to doctrine. A young minister is liable to errors, from his notions being either too lax or overstrained. In both cases it would prove injurious that the error should be remembered, after study and reflection, with advancing years, shall have brought him to a clearer discernment of the truth, and better judgment in the application of it.

It must be acknowledged that, among the regulations of ecclesiastical polity, none at first view are more attractive than that which prescribes for every parish a resident incumbent. How agreeable to picture to one's self, as has been done by poets and romance-writers, from Chaucer down to Goldsmith, a man devoted to his ministerial office, with not a wish or a thought ranging beyond the circuit of its cares! Nor is it in poetry and fiction only that such characters are found; they are scattered, it is hoped not sparingly, over real life, especially in sequestered and rural districts, where there is but small influx of new inhabitants, and little change of occupation. The spirit of the Gospel, unaided by acquisitions of profane learning and experience in the world,—that spirit, and the obligations of the sacred office may, in such situations, suffice to effect most of what is needful. But for the complex state of society that prevails in England, much more is required, both in large towns, and in many extensive districts of the country. A minister there should not only be irreproachable in manners and morals, but accomplished in learning, as far as is possible without sacrifice of the least of his pastoral duties. As necessary, perhaps more so, is it that he should be a citizen as well as a scholar; thoroughly acquainted with the structure of society, and the constitution of civil government, and able to reason upon both with the most expert; all ultimately in order to

support the truths of Christianity, and to diffuse its blessings.

A young man coming fresh from the place of his education, cannot have brought with him these accomplishments; and if the scheme of equalising church incomes, which many advisers are much bent upon, be realised, so that there should be little or no secular inducement for a clergyman to desire a removal from the spot where he may chance to have been first set down; surely not only opportunities for obtaining the requisite qualifications would be diminished, but the motives for desiring to obtain them would be proportionably weakened. And yet these qualifications are indispensable for the diffusion of that knowledge, by which alone the political philosophy of the New Testament can be rightly expounded, and its precepts adequately enforced. In these times, when the press is daily exercising so great a power over the minds of the people, for wrong or for right as may happen, *that* preacher ranks among the first of benefactors who, without stooping to the direct treatment of current politics and passing events, can furnish infallible guidance through the delusions that surround them; and who, appealing to the sanctions of Scripture, may place the grounds of its injunctions in so clear a light, that disaffection shall cease to be cultivated as a laudable propensity, and loyalty cleansed from the dishonour of a blind and prostrate obedience.

It is not, however, in regard to civic duties alone, that this knowledge in a minister of the Gospel is important; it is still more so for softening and subduing private and personal discontents. In all places, and at all times, men have gratuitously troubled themselves, because their survey of the dispensations of Providence has been partial and narrow; but now that readers are so greatly multiplied, men judge as they are *taught*, and reprimands are engendered every where, by imputations being cast upon the government; and are prolonged or aggravated by being ascribed to misconduct or injustice in rulers, when the individual himself only is in fault. If a Christian pastor be competent to deal with these humours, as they may be dealt with, and by no members of society so successfully, both from more frequent and more favourable opportunities of intercourse, and by aid of the authority with which he speaks; he will be a teacher of moderation, a dispenser of the wisdom that blunts approaching distress by submission to God's will, and lightens, by patience, grievances which cannot be removed.

We live in times when nothing, of public good

at least, is generally acceptable, but what we believe can be traced to preconceived intention, and specific acts and formal contrivances of human understanding. A Christian instructor thoroughly accomplished would be a standing restraint upon such presumptuousness of judgment, by impressing the truth that—

In the unreasoning progress of the world
A wiser spirit is at work for us,
A better eye than ours. MS.

Revelation points to the purity and peace of a future world; but our sphere of duty is upon earth; and the relations of impure and conflicting things to each other must be understood, or we shall be perpetually going wrong, in all but goodness of intention; and goodness of intention will itself relax through frequent disappointment. How desirable, then, is it, that a minister of the Gospel should be versed in the knowledge of existing facts, and be accustomed to a wide range of social experience! Nor is it less desirable for the purpose of counterbalancing and tempering in his own mind that ambition with which spiritual power is as apt to be tainted as any other species of power which men covet or possess.

It must be obvious that the scope of the argument is to discourage an attempt which would introduce into the Church of England an equality of income, and station, upon the model of that of Scotland. The sounder part of the Scottish nation know what good their ancestors derived from their church, and feel how deeply the living generation is indebted to it. They respect and love it, as accommodated in so great a measure to a comparatively poor country, through the far greater portion of which prevails a uniformity of employment; but the acknowledged deficiency of theological learning among the clergy of that church is easily accounted for by this very equality. What else may be wanting there, it would be unpleasant to inquire, and might prove invidious to determine: one thing, however, is clear; that in all countries the temporalities of the Church Establishment should bear an analogy to the state of society, otherwise it cannot diffuse its influence through the whole community. In a country so rich and luxurious as England, the character of its clergy must unavoidably sink, and their influence be every where impaired, if individuals from the upper ranks, and men of leading talents, are to have no inducements to enter into that body but such as are purely spiritual. And this 'tinge of secularity' is no reproach to the clergy, nor does

it imply a deficiency of spiritual endowments. Parents and guardians, looking forward to sources of honourable maintenance for their children and wards, often direct their thoughts early towards the church, being determined partly by outward circumstances, and partly by indications of seriousness, or intellectual fitness. It is natural that a boy or youth, with such a prospect before him, should turn his attention to those studies, and be led into those habits of reflection, which will in some degree tend to prepare him for the duties he is hereafter to undertake. As he draws nearer to the time when he will be called to these duties, he is both led and compelled to examine the Scriptures. He becomes more and more sensible of their truth. Devotion grows in him; and what might begin in temporal considerations, will end (as in a majority of instances we trust it does) in a spiritual-mindedness not unworthy of that Gospel, the lessons of which he is to teach, and the faith of which he is to inculcate. Not inappositely may be here repeated an observation which, from its obviousness and importance, must have been frequently made, viz. that the impoverishing of the clergy, and bringing their incomes much nearer to a level, would not cause them to become less worldly-minded: the emoluments, howsoever reduced, would be as eagerly sought for, but by men from lower classes in society; men who, by their manners, habits, abilities, and the scanty measure of their attainments, would unavoidably be less fitted for their station, and less competent to discharge its duties.

Visionary notions have in all ages been afloat upon the subject of best providing for the clergy; notions which have been sincerely entertained by good men, with a view to the improvement of that order, and eagerly caught at and dwelt upon, by the designing, for its degradation and disparagement. Some are beguiled by what they call the *voluntary system*, not seeing (what stares one in the face at the very threshold) that they who stand in most need of religious instruction are unconscious of the want, and therefore cannot reasonably be expected to make any sacrifices in order to supply it. Will the licentious, the sensual, and the depraved, take from the means of their gratifications and pursuits, to support a discipline that cannot advance without uprooting the trees that bear the fruit which they devour so greedily? Will they pay the price of that seed whose harvest is to be reaped in an invisible world? A voluntary system for the religious exigencies of a people numerous and circumstanced as we are! Not more absurd

would it be to expect that a knot of boys should draw upon the pittance of their pocket-money to build schools, or out of the abundance of their discretion be able to select fit masters to teach and keep them in order! Some, who clearly perceive the incompetence and folly of such a scheme for the agricultural part of the people, nevertheless think it feasible in large towns, where the rich might subscribe for the religious instruction of the poor. Alas! they know little of the thick darkness that spreads over the streets and alleys of our large towns. The parish of Lambeth, a few years since, contained not more than one church and three or four small proprietary chapels, while dissenting chapels, of every denomination were still more scantily found there; yet the inhabitants of the parish amounted at that time to upwards of 50,000. Were the parish church and the chapels of the Establishment existing there, an *impediment* to the spread of the Gospel among that mass of people? Who shall dare to say so? But if any one, in the face of the fact which has just been stated, and in opposition to authentic reports to the same effect from various other quarters, should still contend, that a voluntary system is sufficient for the spread and maintenance of religion, we would ask, what kind of religion? wherein would it differ, among the many, from deplorable fanaticism?

For the preservation of the Church Establishment, all men, whether they belong to it or not, could they perceive their true interest, would be strenuous: but how inadequate are its provisions for the needs of the country! and how much is it to be regretted that, while its zealous friends yield to alarms on account of the hostility of dissent, they should so much over-rate the danger to be apprehended from that quarter, and almost overlook the fact that hundreds of thousands of our fellow-countrymen, though formally and nominally of the Church of England, never enter her places of worship, neither have they communication with her ministers! This deplorable state of things was partly produced by a decay of zeal among the rich and influential, and partly by a want of due expansive power in the constitution of the Establishment as regulated by law. Private benefactors, in their efforts to build and endow churches, have been frustrated, or too much impeded by legal obstacles: these, where they are unreasonable or unfitted for the times, ought to be removed; and, keeping clear of intolerance and injustice, means should be used to render the presence and powers of the church commensurate with the wants of a shifting and still-increasing population.

This cannot be effected, unless the English Government vindicate the truth, that, as her church exists for the benefit of all (though not in equal degree), whether of her communion or not, all should be made to contribute to its support. If this ground be abandoned, cause will be given to fear that a moral wound may be inflicted upon the heart of the English people, for which a remedy cannot be speedily provided by the utmost efforts which the members of the Church will themselves be able to make.

But let the friends of the church be of good courage. Powers are at work, by which, under Divine Providence, she may be strengthened and the sphere of her usefulness extended; not by alterations in her Liturgy, accommodated to this or that demand of finical taste, nor by cutting off this or that from her articles or Canons, to which the scrupulous or the overweening may object. Covert schism, and open nonconformity, would survive after alterations, however promising in the eyes of those whose subtlety had been exercised in making them. Latitudinarianism is the parhelion of liberty of conscience, and will ever successfully lay claim to a divided worship. Among Presbyterians, Socinians, Baptists, and Independents, there will always be found numbers who will tire of their several creeds, and some will come over to the Church. Conventicles may disappear, congregations in each denomination may fall into decay or be broken up, but the conquests which the National Church ought chiefly to aim at, lie among the thousands and tens of thousands of the unhappy outcasts who grow up with no religion at all. The wants of these cannot but be feelingly remembered. Whatever may be the disposition of the new constituencies under the reformed parliament, and the course which the men of their choice may be inclined or compelled to follow, it may be confidently hoped that individuals acting in their private capacities, will endeavour to make up for the deficiencies of the legislature. Is it too much to expect that proprietors of large estates, where the inhabitants are without religious instruction, or where it is sparingly supplied, will deem it their duty to take part in this good work; and that thriving manufacturers and merchants will, in their several neighbourhoods, be sensible of the like obligation, and act upon it with generous rivalry?

Moreover, the force of public opinion is rapidly increasing: and some may bend to it, who are not so happy as to be swayed by a higher motive; especially they who derive large incomes from

lay-impropriations, in tracts of country where ministers are few and meagrely provided for. A claim still stronger may be acknowledged by those who, round their superb habitations, or elsewhere, walk over vast estates which were lavished upon their ancestors by royal favouritism or purchased at insignificant prices after church-spoliation; such proprietors, though not conscience-stricken (there is no call for that) may be prompted to make a return for which their tenantry and dependents will learn to bless their names. An impulse has been given; an accession of means from these several sources, co-operating with a *well*-considered change in the distribution of some parts of the property at present possessed by the church, a change scrupulously founded upon due respect to law and justice, will, we trust, bring about so much of what her friends desire, that the rest may be calmly waited for, with thankfulness for what shall have been obtained.

Let it not be thought unbecoming in a layman, to have treated at length a subject with which the clergy are more intimately conversant. All may, without impropriety, speak of what deeply concerns all; nor need an apology be offered for going over ground which has been trod before so ably and so often: without pretending, however, to any thing of novelty, either in matter or manner, something may have been offered to view, which will save the writer from the imputation of having little to recommend his labour, but goodness of intention.

It was with reference to thoughts and feelings expressed in verse, that I entered upon the above notices, and with verse I will conclude. The passage is extracted from my MSS. written above thirty years ago: it turns upon the individual dignity which humbleness of social condition does not preclude, but frequently promotes. It has no direct bearing upon clubs for the discussion of public affairs, nor upon political or trade-unions; but if a single workman—who, being a member of one of those clubs, runs the risk of becoming an agitator, or who, being enrolled in a union, must be left without a will of his own, and therefore a slave—should read these lines, and be touched by them, I should indeed rejoice, and little would I care for losing credit as a poet with intemperate critics, who think differently from me upon political philosophy or public measures, if the

sober-minded admit that, in general views, my affections have been moved, and my imagination exercised, under and *for* the guidance of reason.

‘Here might I pause, and bend in reverence
To Nature, and the power of human minds;
To men as they are men within themselves.
How oft high service is performed within,
When all the external man is rude in show;
Not like a temple rich with pomp and gold,
But a mere mountain chapel that protects
Its simple worshippers from sun and shower!
Of these, said I, shall be my song; of these,
If future years mature me for the task,
Will I record the praises, making verse
Deal boldly with substantial things—in truth
And sanctity of passion, speak of these,
That justice may be done, obeisance paid
Where it is due. Thus haply shall I teach
Inspire, through unadulterated ears
Pour rapture, tenderness, and hope; my theme
No other than the very heart of man,
As found among the best of those who live,
Not unexalted by religious faith,
Nor uninformed by books, good books, though few,
In Nature’s presence: thence may I select
Sorrow that is not sorrow, but delight,
And miserable love that is not pain
To hear of, for the glory that redounds
Therefrom to human kind, and what we are.
Be mine to follow with no timid step
Where knowledge leads me; it shall be my pride
That I have dared to tread this holy ground,
Speaking no dream, but things oracular,
Matter not lightly to be heard by those
Who to the letter of the outward promise
Do read the invisible soul; by men adroit
In speech, and for communion with the world
Accomplished, minds whose faculties are then
Most active when they are most eloquent,
And elevated most when most admired.
Men may be found of other mould than these;
Who are their own upholders, to themselves
Encouragement and energy, and will;
Expressing liveliest thoughts in lively words
As native passion dictates. Others, too,
There are, among the walks of homely life,
Still higher, men for contemplation framed;
Shy, and unpractised in the strife of phrase;
Meek men, whose very souls perhaps would sink
Beneath them, summoned to such intercourse.
Their’s is the language of the heavens, the power,
The thought, the image, and the silent joy;
Words are but under-agents in their souls;
When they are grasping with their greatest strength
They do not breathe among them; this I speak
In gratitude to God, who feeds our hearts
For his own service, knoweth, loveth us,
When we are unregarded by the world.’

ADDITIONAL POEMS.

GIORDANO, verily thy Pencil's skill
 Hath here portrayed with Nature's happiest grace
 The fair Endymion couched on Latmos-hill ;
 And Dian gazing on the Shepherd's face
 In rapture,—yet suspending her embrace,
 As not unconscious with what power the thrill
 Of her most timid touch his sleep would chase,
 And, with his sleep, that beauty calm and still.
 O may this work have found its last retreat
 Here in a mountain-Bard's secure abode,
 One to whom, yet a School-boy, Cynthia showed
 A face of love which he in love would greet,
 Fixed, by her smile, upon some rocky seat ;
 Or lured along where green-wood paths he trod.

RYDAL MOUNT, 1846.

Who but is pleased to watch the moon on high
 Travelling where she from time to time enshrouds
 Her head, and nothing loth her Majesty
 Renounces, till among the scattered clouds
 One with its kindling edge declares that soon
 Will reappear before the uplifted eye
 A Form as bright, as beautiful a moon,
 To glide in open prospect through clear sky.
 Pity that such a promise e'er should prove
 False in the issue, that yon seeming space
 Of sky, should be in truth the steadfast face
 Of a cloud flat and dense, through which must
 move,
 (By transit not unlike man's frequent doom)
 The wanderer lost in more determined gloom !

1846.

WHERE lies the truth? has Man, in wisdom's
 creed
 A pitiable doom; for respite brief
 A care more anxious, or a heavier grief?
 Is he ungrateful, and doth little heed
 God's bounty, soon forgotten; or indeed,
 Must Man, with labour born, awake to sorrow
 When flowers rejoice and Larks with rival speed
 Spring from their nests to bid the Sun good
 morrow?

They mount for rapture as their songs proclaim
 Warbled in hearing both of earth and sky;
 But o'er the contrast wherefore heave a sigh?
 Like those aspirants let us soar—our aim,
 Through life's worst trials, whether shocks or
 snares,
 A happier, brighter, purer Heaven than theirs.

1846.

ILLUSTRATED BOOKS AND NEWSPAPERS.

DISCOURSE was deemed Man's noblest attribute,
 And written words the glory of his hand;
 Then followed Printing with enlarged command
 For thought—dominion vast and absolute
 For spreading truth, and making love expand.
 Now prose and verse sunk into disrepute
 Must lacquey a dumb Art that best can suit
 The taste of this once-intellectual Land.
 A backward movement surely have we here,
 From manhood—back to childhood; for the age—
 Back towards caverned life's first rude career.
 Avaunt this vile abuse of pictured page!
 Must eyes be all in all, the tongue and ear
 Nothing? Heaven keep us from a lower stage!

1846.

THE unremitting voice of nightly streams
 That waste so oft, we think, its tuneful powers,
 If neither soothing to the worm that gleams
 Through dewy grass, nor small birds hushed in
 bowers,
 Nor unto silent leaves and drowsy flowers,—
 That voice of unpretending harmony
 (For who what is shall measure by what seems
 To be, or not to be,
 Or tax high Heaven with prodigality?)
 Once not a healing influence that can creep
 Into the human breast, and mix with sleep
 To regulate the motion of our dreams
 For kindly issues—as through every clime
 Was felt near murmuring brooks in earliest time;
 As at this day, the rudest swains who dwell
 Where torrents roar, or hear the tinkling knell
 Of water-breaks, with grateful heart could tell.

1846.

I KNOW an aged Man constrained to dwell
In a large house of public charity,
Where he abides, as in a Prisoner's cell,
With numbers near, alas ! no company.

When he could creep about, at will, though poor
And forced to live on alms, this old Man fed
A Redbreast, one that to his cottage door
Came not, but in a lane partook his bread.

There, at the root of one particular tree,
An easy seat this worn-out Labourer found
While Robin pecked the crumbs upon his knee
Laid one by one, or scattered on the ground.

Dear intercourse was theirs, day after day ;
What signs of mutual gladness when they met !
Think of their common peace, their simple play,
The parting moment and its fond regret.

Months passed in love that failed not to fulfil,
In spite of season's change, its own demand,
By fluttering pinions here and busy bill ;
There by caresses from a tremulous hand.

Thus in the chosen spot a tie so strong
Was formed between the solitary pair,
That when his fate had housed him mid a throng
The Captive shunned all converse proffered there.

Wife, children, kindred, they were dead and gone ;
But, if no evil hap his wishes crossed,
One living Stay was left, and on that one
Some recompense for all that he had lost.

O that the good old Man had power to prove,
By message sent through air or visible token,
That still he loves the Bird, and still must love ;
That friendship lasts though fellowship is broken !

1846.

TO AN OCTOGENARIAN.

AFFECTIONS lose their objects ; Time brings forth
No successors ; and, lodged in memory,
If love exist no longer, it must die,—
Wanting accustomed food must pass from earth,
Or never hope to reach a second birth.
This sad belief, the happiest that is left
To thousands, share not thou ; howe'er bereft,
Scorned, or neglected, fear not such a dearth.
Though poor and destitute of friends thou art,
Perhaps the sole survivor of thy race,
One to whom Heaven assigns that mournful part
The utmost solitude of age to face,
Still shall be left some corner of the heart
Where Love for living Thing can find a place.

1846.

How beautiful the Queen of Night, on high
Her way pursuing among scattered clouds,
Where, ever and anon, her head she shrouds
Hidden from view in dense obscurity.
But look, and to the watchful eye
A brightening edge will indicate that soon
We shall behold the struggling Moon
Break forth,—again to walk the clear blue sky.

WHY should we weep or mourn,— Angelic boy,
For such thou wert ere from our sight removed,
Holy, and ever dutiful—beloved
From day to day with never-ceasing joy,
And hopes as dear as could the heart employ
In aught to earth pertaining ? Death has proved
His might, nor less his mercy, as behoved—
Death conscious that he only could destroy
The bodily frame. That beauty is laid low
To moulder in a far-off field of Rome ;
But Heaven is now, blest Child, thy Spirit's home :
When such choice communion which we know,
Is felt, thy Roman-burial place will be
Surely a sweet remembrancer of Thee.

1846.

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THE END.

